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THE NEW
STATESMAN AND NATION

Incorporating *The Athenæum*

Vol. II. No. 32 (New Series) SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1931 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper.] SIXPENCE

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DECISION is still postponed and the betting changes from hour to hour. At the beginning of the week an early election was said to be assured, on Tuesday the prospect had receded, on Wednesday it was on again, and at the time of writing it is still probable but by no means certain. Nor does anyone know what new combinations will be formed or how the issues will be presented. Even the corridors of the House of Commons—the most ancient whispering gallery in the world—have never before in history known so confused and complicated a series of intrigues and rumours. What is clear is that each little group hovers about under the impression that Mr. MacDonald, who has the trump cards in his hands just now, is really planning to do just what it wants him to do. Most of them will find themselves mistaken. But any of the rumours may prove true or false: the only one we quite refuse to believe is that Lord Beaverbrook has sent for the King.

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Nothing else can be ruled out. Mr. MacDonald might even resign and leave one of the other leaders to try to form a Government. But several things are clear. Mr. MacDonald will not play the purely Tory game of announcing a tariff policy and going to the country at the head of what would be obviously nothing else than a Conservative Government. A "doctor's mandate"—a free hand for the Prime Minister—is, however, a real possibility. It is in our own view an illusion to think that the election which would result would be in any substantial way different from a usual party election—and one fought with extreme bitterness on class lines. Certainly the Labour Opposition would be united in accepting the challenge, and Mr. Lloyd George, we have reason to believe, is equally clear in refusing to regard a "doctor's mandate" as anything but a device to keep a difficult team together for the moment. As to the tariff issue, the fact is gradually being brought home to a large part of the electorate that there are already the beginnings of something like a trade boom in several important industries. Devaluation has, in fact, already provided us with a very effective tariff. The case for a tariff will only become strong again if a large number of other countries follow us off the gold standard. And at present we do not know how many there will be.

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Our going off the gold standard was a staggering blow to other countries. The full shock to the world's credit and trading structure has by no means as yet been felt. But Sweden and Norway abandoned the gold standard on Monday; on Tuesday Denmark suspended it until November 30th; and Portugal and Bolivia have likewise gone off gold since the suspension of gold payments here. The fact that

the Scandinavian countries have so promptly followed our lead is not surprising. Britain is by far their most important market as well as their industrial rival, and they cannot afford to give us the competitive advantage of a depreciated currency. Their decision, on the other hand, should help to keep in check the inevitable rise in our cost of living. Other industrial countries may soon follow suit, perhaps linking their fortunes to sterling instead of to the franc and the dollar. The fate of gold now hangs in the balance in Central Europe, in the Baltic States, and in Italy. The need of a world currency conference is thus becoming hourly more urgent.

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The last act of Parliament before it adjourns—or is dissolved—is to be the passage of a Bill to check profiteering. This is very urgently needed, as retailers, in some quarters, are already raising prices indiscriminately—with an alacrity only equalled by their inability to get them down again when the level of wholesale prices is falling. The present position is that the price of imports to the wholesaler is bound to rise (with sterling externally worth 16s. no Government can prevent this), but that there is a wide margin of distributors' profits which will tend to expand, without the least justification, if effective action is not taken. Thus there is no reason why enhanced profits should be made on present stocks or on home-produced foodstuffs; no reason, either, why the increased cost of imports should be passed on to the consumer with additions for the middleman's benefit. That way lies currency inflation. We trust that the Government's Bill will go a good deal farther than the Consumers' Council Bill, which perished last session from lack of vitamins. We trust, in particular, that the Bill will include full power to inspect documents, power to regulate prices, and the penalty of imprisonment, as well as substantial fines, for really flagrant offences. What is wanted in this question of prices is not a Consumers' Council but a Star Chamber.

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The Labour Party's official policy, outlined this week in a series of resolutions drawn up by the Labour Executive, is terribly devoid of inspiration. To the substance of the resolutions we have no objection; but they give us a feeling of having heard all that before on quite a number of occasions, and of having heard it better put. There is too little sense in the tone of the resolutions of the immediacy and severity of the world crisis, and too much vagueness about the remedies proposed. What, for example, does "control" of the banking system mean? The vital question is how this control is to be exercised. Does it mean socialisation of the banks, or does it not? And does the decision in favour of stabilised internal prices mean a repudiation of the idea of returning to the gold standard, or what does it mean? Probably, if the Labour Party has to face an election, it will contrive to infuse more liveliness into its Election Manifesto than it has put into these resolutions. But will it also be more concrete and definite? It needs to be; for the country is looking to the Opposition for a plain and clear-cut declaration of what it means to do if it is returned to power.

The visit of M. Laval and M. Briand to Berlin has added nothing concrete to the slender structure of European peace. The French Ministers were favourably impressed by the correctness of their reception, and in this respect a better atmosphere has certainly been created. The Germans, however, make no concealment of their disappointment. Officially, all political questions were ruled out of the discussions. Actually, there was a private exchange of views about reparations and disarmament, and here the French were uncompromising and unconciliatory. The Germans were given to understand that France could not disarm, because her army is the chief bulwark of Western Europe against Bolshevism. The French Ministers also made it clear that, even if there was a general cancellation of war debts, France could not give up her right to the unpostponable reparations. In the purely economic discussions there was no mention of French credits, and the one tangible result of the visit was the setting up of a Franco-German Economic Committee. As this Committee had already been accepted in principle before the Berlin visit, it can hardly be described as the special achievement of M. Laval's mission. The one hope is that M. François-Poncet, the new French Ambassador, who has a sympathetic understanding of Germany's problems, may be able to extract some real benefit from the better atmosphere which has now been created in Paris.

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The tension has relaxed in Manchuria. The appeal of the Council of the League of Nations and the attitude of the United States perhaps helped to strengthen the hands of the more prudent sections in Tokio. The Japanese Government has given assurances more or less satisfactory to Geneva, and the troops are being gradually withdrawn from the positions they had seized. The Chinese, however, are by no means placated. Anti-Japanese feeling has shown itself in various forms, and in certain places in violent outbreaks. A mob of students made a savage attack the other day on Mr. Wang, the Foreign Minister, in his office at Nanking, and at Hong Kong there has been rioting and damage. It seems that the Southern Government at Canton has also been anxious to take a hand—though how exactly is not clear—in the quarrel with Japan. We may assume that the immediate danger is now past. But that does not mean that Manchuria is off the map. Far back into the past it has been a bone of contention among Chinese, Japanese and Russians, and under the drive of economic necessity and political ambitions the struggle will continue. At the moment this struggle is complicated, as it often has been, by civil dissensions among the Chinese; the provinces are now in open disloyalty to their ruler, Chang Hsueh-liang. As for the efforts of the League to improve the relations of Japan and China, something may be effected when passions have calmed. But the Covenant and its apostles are not held in much honour in the Far East.

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Uncertainty about the political situation in England is having a most depressing effect upon the Round Table Conference. The Minorities Committee meets only to be adjourned immediately, as it is clear that neither Hindu nor Moslem leaders are prepared to

begin negotiations in public until they feel more confidence about the future Conference. There is a growing feeling amongst the delegates that a Conservative victory at the polls would ensure a deadlock over the question of financial safeguards, and they do not wish to commit themselves definitely upon other controversial subjects in view of a possible breakdown. The situation is made worse by doubts as to the future of Lord Sankey, who is probably the only English politician capable of managing the Conference in a serious crisis. When the Conference is divided along racial lines, the chairman should be known to have the Government behind him, and Lord Sankey, once happy in the Labour Party, certainly finds his position in a Coalition Government increasingly irksome. If it were certain that he would remain in office some of this paralysing feeling of suspicion would be removed. But until the delegates can tell whether next November's Government intends to continue with the Federal scheme they cannot be expected to take much interest in the discussion of details.

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Whatever may happen as to the proposed visit of the French Premier to Washington, it is certain that European developments in respect of the gold standard will have important results on American public opinion before the meeting of the Houses of Congress in December. The President is being urged to move towards the calling of a currency conference. Public support for the policy of war-debt cancellation is manifestly growing, along with the agitation against the high tariff policy; but it is as well to remember that the eve of the session coming just before a presidential campaign is a most unfavourable time for White House initiative. Mr. Hoover in the meantime has declared for economy in naval construction. He intends to ask Congress for a drastic cut in the vote for new construction, to the extent of some £85,000,000. This must mean a bitter fight in Washington, with a revival of the angry talk about the permanent inferiority of the United States at sea which raged for months after the London Naval Conference. Nevertheless, Mr. Hoover will be able to count upon a great force of public sentiment for economy in armaments. It will be vocal and general, although it may not influence Congress in any marked degree before the Disarmament Conference of next February.

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The builders have agreed to stabilise wage-rates for a further period. This is a sensible decision, which we hope will be followed in other industries in which wage disputes have been threatened. For until the pound settles down, and there are clear indications of the effect on retail prices of our departure from the gold standard, it is clearly impossible to say what ought to be done about wage-rates. It is true that stabilisation of money wages at present levels is bound to mean some fall in real wages; for, whatever spokesmen of the Government may say, the depreciation of sterling is bound to involve, before long, some increase in retail prices at home. This increase should, indeed, be much less than the fall in the gold value of sterling, for only a fraction of the commodities which enter into the cost of living ought to rise in price. But some effect there will be; and it is manifestly absurd to ask the Trade Unions to agree to reductions in money-wages at a time when the indirect reductions that will arise from changes in the cost of living cannot be even approximately estimated. For the moment, the correct course is to leave money wages unchanged. The time for readjustments will come when the effects of our new monetary policy can be at least roughly measured.

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The *Daily Worker* is usually a bright little sheet. Why indeed should it not be, seeing that every breakdown and failure is so much sheer satisfaction to the pukka Communist? But its issue of last Saturday presented a quite new appearance—new, that is, in English post-war experience, though familiar enough in Poland and other countries where minorities are not supposed to express opinions. It was chequered with large blank spaces marked "Censored by the Police." The story will no doubt come out more fully. For the moment the printer of the paper is on bail and comment obviously undesirable and impossible. There is one matter which we hope to see thoroughly cleared up. The defence make serious allegations about the legality of this "police censorship," and at the proper time some reply should be forthcoming to Mr. W. J. Brown's question in the House of Commons last Wednesday.

* * *

The "sensation" of the week at the British Association—from Fleet Street's point of view—was perhaps Bishop Barnes's expression of the conviction that other worlds than ours must be inhabited. Why this suggestion should be regarded as sensational is not very clear. Scientists have, until recently, pronounced the thing to be impossible ("impossible" has now been expunged from their vocabulary), but from the man in the street's point of view it seems only reasonable that there should be plenty of life elsewhere. For one thing, a lifeless universe seems such an extravagant waste of material; for another, it would be too depressing if billions of years of evolution (one cannot be precise, as physical research has now shattered the geologists' time-scale)—if all this effort had produced no living being more adequate to his circumstances than is man. The moral of Bishop Barnes's speculations, however, is that even the non-mystical mind must seek at times to burst its own limitations. He, who has been so hoity-toity about other people's angels, must still escape somehow from the aridity of his own theism, and so find refuge in a "scientific" hypothesis that we may yet get wireless messages from the stars.

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May we remind contributors to our University Supplement that all articles and poems should reach this office before the end of October? We offer four ten-guinea prizes for contributions written by men or women members of British Universities who are not more than twenty-six years of age. The prizes are for a political "leader" of not more than 1,700 words, for a short story, sketch or essay of not more than 2,000 words, for a piece of literary or artistic criticism of not more than 1,700 words, and for a poem of not more than 60 lines. The full details of the University Supplement (originally announced in our issue of May 16th) will be reprinted in next week's special literary number of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING?

THE man in the street may be forgiven just now if he feels as if society had suddenly turned into a football match, and as if his own head were the football. The old comparatively stable world seems suddenly to have collapsed; the old leaders to be contradicting everything they ever stood for; the old conversation about parties and politics to have been transformed into a bewildering argument about the gold standard, confidence, fiduciary issues and the like—subjects which he has always left to experts and believes himself utterly incompetent to understand. Is there to be an election? A tariff? A doctor's mandate? Is a National Government merely a three-headed donkey like other Coalitions? Is it or is it not a good thing to be off the gold standard? What is really happening?

Now, although the technical problems involved in this crisis are extremely difficult, the underlying issues are quite simple. Anyone who avoids the gossip of politics and who keeps his intelligence alert can grasp them. The essence of the situation can be grasped in a sentence. The system of private enterprise, commonly summarised as capitalism, which has so enormously increased the wealth of the world and which has locked the nations into an economic unit, is manifestly breaking down because it has failed either to over-ride the political independence of nations or to evolve for itself a satisfactory method of exchange and distribution. Its failure is writ large all around us. For the moment the most obvious symptom is that gold, which we have learnt to rely upon as the medium of exchange, no longer serves our purpose. The gold lies sterile in the vaults of Paris and New York, and everyone, including the Americans and French, must go short of the necessities of life because of the failure of capitalism to evolve a reasonably efficient technique of exchange. So far everyone will agree. We may even find it best to abandon gold altogether and set up a new method of exchange based on an international index figure. In any case the first necessity is to find some solution for this problem of gold.

Why then, the plain man will ask, do we not get on with the job? Mainly because we have not learnt to trust any organisation larger than the State. The experts at Geneva have been telling us that this would happen ever since the Genoa Conference in 1922, just as they have long been telling us that we were mutually ruining ourselves by our tariff walls. But we do not listen to them or even read such meagre reports of their remarks as find their way into our newspapers. One of the primary reasons why the gold is locked up in this ludicrous way is that we perpetuate ancient debts. Most of us have long been only too anxious to be rid of this load of reparations and inter-allied debts. And Mr. Hoover, we have reason to believe, is as ready to go as far as his public permit him. Meanwhile, the French, perpetually anxious to keep their stranglehold over Germany, have again in conference at Berlin refused even to discuss the problems of debts with Germany. And this though Germany is close to starvation and closer still to revolution! And this though one of the chief French banks was on the point of closing its doors only a few days ago, and though others are known to be in a scarcely less serious predicament at the moment!

Perhaps in some weeks' or months' time, when society is just so much closer to sheer chaos, nationalism may bow to necessity. And then, asks our plain man, shall we be out of the wood? When there is a redistribution of the world's gold or a new medium of exchange or a new sterling block formed round this country—then shall we find our economic difficulties solved? On the contrary, we shall only have accomplished one immediately necessary step; removed one absurd obstacle to the kind of reorganisation that we cannot long avoid. For capitalism has not only failed to evolve a workable technique of exchange: it has equally failed in the task of distribution.

In each nation we still have two nations, just as obviously and dangerously as when Disraeli and Karl Marx uttered their warnings in the middle of the last century. Indeed, far more dangerously because there are at least (to take a modest official estimate) twenty million unemployed workers in the world to-day; because in America, in England, in France, in Germany and in every country these unemployed (and the workers who are conscious that they, too, may be unemployed to-morrow) are increasingly unwilling to accept their poverty and their idleness as necessary evils. There, before their eyes, are the goods they cannot afford to buy; there, near their homes, are the factories capable of producing the clothes and comforts they need. Capitalism, in short, has solved the technical problem of production and failed utterly to satisfy human needs.

Now in these circumstances it is idle to denounce the Bolsheviks or to pretend that we are not living on a volcano. Russia is far from Paradise, but it has, in the eyes of every man not besottedly complacent with his own bank balance, the enormous advantage of being the one part of the world where a co-ordinated and coherent effort is being made to utilise the available wealth of the country for the equal benefit of the people who live in it. And it needs no great intelligence to see that this contrast cannot remain in the world. The choice is between socialising and reorganising our economic system and watching its destruction. The real obstacle to internal reorganisation is the same as the obstacle to international reorganisation. The retarding force is the dead hand of old indebtedness, the preference of those who have a legal claim upon the products of society rather to see society collapse in chaos than to surrender one iota of the sanctity of private property. But, again, just as, internationally, the creditor countries may be forced into sense when they see the abyss in front of them, so, internally, we have still to prove whether property owners would prefer revolution to constructive socialism. The issue is not at all beyond the plain man's comprehension.

Within a few weeks he will probably have to face the issue at the polls. The choice will be between attempting to patch up a decaying system with tariffs—and the alternative slogan of a "free hand" will not really alter the choice—and a policy which, vague and imperfectly worked out though it still is, at least faces facts and offers a plan. Public control of the financial system is the first condition of the public control of development of industry and trade and the land. These things can no longer be treated as the fantasies of Utopia-mongers, or as adventures over whose risks we can afford to sit down and argue. They are measures demanded by common sense.

WHY AND HOW WE MUST SOCIALISE THE BANKS

[The "nationalisation of the Banks" has long been part of the Labour programme. Recent events have made it an immediately urgent political question. We have asked Mr. Cole to state his own view of why and how we may socialise the banks.—ED., N.S. & N.]

IN the past, we have all been told again and again that it is vitally necessary to avoid any political interference with the banking system, which must be left free to do its highly technical work in its own way. But it is now clear that banking and politics cannot be divorced, and that, unless the State takes steps to control the bankers, the bankers will inevitably control the State. Banking policy, whether we like it or not, is a most important part of politics; and, unless the politicians and the banks pull the same way, and follow a common policy, it will be not the banker but the politician who will find his schemes brought to nothing as soon as international complications arise.

It is not necessary to attribute this situation to any deliberate and carefully matured conspiracy of the bankers against the public. The power has fallen into their hands by the logic of events, far more than they have consciously planned to make it their own. But the result is the same. Statesmen attempting to govern within the limits of a national policy are helpless in face of the vicissitudes of the world financial system which is the bankers' province.

There are in this matter at present three distinct schools of thought among those who agree upon the necessity of drastic changes in our banking policy. One of these schools holds that the powers possessed by the State are already adequate, without any direct measure of socialisation, if they are rightly used. The problem, it is said, is to secure a management of currency and credit designed to make possible a fuller development of our economic resources through cheaper and more abundant money; and this object can be pursued with ease and safety now that we are temporarily at least rid of the ever-present fear of a drain of gold. The suspension of the gold standard is, on this showing, the opportunity for an expansionist policy; and it is urged that a Chancellor who firmly presses for this policy can secure its adoption through the Bank of England without any direct measure of socialisation.

A second school of thought urges, with the same objects in mind, the complete socialisation of the Bank of England. The Bank, it is urged, is at present a private corporation dominated by the financiers of the City of London, and prone to take the point of view of the City rather than of industry or of the community as a whole. The personnel of the Bank's directors, it is argued, needs substantial amendments; and the Bank itself, wielding so great a power for good or ill in our international dealings as well as at home, ought to be a responsible institution under full and direct public control. This has been in the past the policy of the Labour Party, which has advocated the socialisation of the Bank of England, and its reconstitution as a public corporation under the State with a governing body representative of industry and of the consuming public as well as of commerce and finance.

But there is a third school of thought which holds strongly that such a measure will not go nearly far enough, and will largely fail of its effect unless it is extended to cover the great Joint Stock Banks as well. This school points out that the problem to be faced includes not only the reform of monetary policy, in order to secure a more abundant supply of credit, but also an effective guidance of this credit into the right channels of economic development. Under our present financial system, the Bank of England's policy is concerned mainly with the total volume of credit, which it regulates primarily in accordance with international considerations, whereas the Joint Stock Banks are concerned with the distribution of this volume of credit among the several applicants for bank advances. Socialisation of the Bank of England would, to a great extent, give the State control over the volume of credit; and it would doubtless also enable the State to influence, up to a point, the policy of the Joint Stock Banks in its distribution. But it would not give the State any direct or at all complete control in this sphere; nor would it enable the State to tackle effectively the problem of those "frozen credits" which have arisen out of the banks' past advances to industries now in a state of depression.

Now, the fundamental purpose of controlling the financial machine is not only to secure a currency system managed on expansionist principles, but also to secure effective leverage for a concerted policy of industrial reorganisation and development. For years past we have been watching the failure of the great basic industries to reorganise themselves, or to get free from the masses of bank indebtedness that are weighing them down and keeping up their costs of production. The number of businesses virtually in pawn to the banks can be reckoned in thousands; and clearly the policy of the banks, both in dealing with frozen credits and debentures and in making fresh advances to the depressed industries, is bound to be a very important factor in the work of reorganisation.

Most people will agree that these frozen credits ought to be separated sharply from the ordinary short-term advances made by the banks, and somehow funded in the hands of a separate corporation, or series of corporations, on terms which will relieve the pressure upon industry, under the condition that industry, in return for this relief, takes effective steps to set its house in order. No less clearly, the granting of current advances ought to be closely connected with this policy, and made conditional in the same way. If the State—as seems necessary in view of the prolonged failure of business to reorganise itself—is to be the primary agent in this work of industrial reconstruction, it is surely indispensable that the State shall have direct control of that part of the financial system through which the reorganised industries will get credit, as well as of the liquidation of the frozen credits already in existence. For these reasons, socialisation of the Joint Stock Banks seems, from the standpoint of national economic planning and development, the necessary complement to socialisation of the Bank of England.

This does not mean that either the Bank of England or the Joint Stock Banks ought to be taken over and run by the Treasury or on the lines of a Government department; for, as I have long urged, that form of socialisation is out of date. What is needed is to reorganise the Bank of England as a public corporation, similar to the Central Electricity Board, with a body of directors nominated and removable by the Government, and so constituted as to include representatives of industry and labour as well as of finance. I should be disposed to favour a small full-time governing body, broadly representative of these types of experience, aided by a larger court of governors drawn directly from each of the main groups concerned in the efficient working of the Bank. Day-to-day political interference should be kept down to the absolute minimum; but there should be no doubt concerning the final control of the State through its power to appoint or remove the governors. Its employees would not be Civil Servants, any more than the employees of the Central Electricity Board or the B.B.C.; but in matters of high policy it would be fully amenable to public control.

The Joint Stock Banks could be dealt with on similar lines, and reorganised in much the same way as public corporations under State control. For the present, in order to reduce changes in structure to the minimum and

to avoid the creation of an instrument so large as to be unwieldy, it would be best to leave the Big Five in separate existence, only equipping them with new Boards of Directors appointed by the State in such a way as to ensure the closest contact and co-operation among them and between them as a group and the reformed Treasury and Bank of England. There has been far too little contact between the Central Bank and the Joint Stock Banks hitherto. Under the new system, they ought to work as closely related parts of a single unified machine, in the closest touch with the needs of industry and commerce as well as of finance.

At that point, for the time being, direct socialisation of our existing financial institutions had best stop short, though it may need to go farther at a later stage. Bill brokers can be left, as now, to borrow from the Joint Stock Banks or, on occasions of stringency, from the Bank of England, with the assurance that, if the banks are in the hands of the State, policy in financing the business of the broker will be effectively governed by considerations of the public interest. Much the same conditions apply to acceptance houses, except that these have larger resources of their own, and therefore rather more independence. The necessary degree of control over them could, however, be secured if the banks themselves were in public hands.

Broadly, then, our aims in bringing the financial machine under effective public control will be threefold. First, we must set out to secure that our international financial transactions on short term shall be so managed as at once to keep our foreign exchange position under satisfactory control and to ensure an adequate supply of credit and currency for the needs of domestic industry and commerce—"adequate" here meaning sufficient to permit a policy of industrial expansion leading to increased employment to be pursued. This is mainly a matter of the policy of the Central Bank, to be brought under public control by the socialisation of the Bank of England. The second aim is to ensure the best possible use of the available supply of credit in order to increase production and employment in the industries capable of expansion, and at the same time to liquidate speedily the top-heavy interest burdens on industry which are a legacy from the difficulties of recent years. This is to be achieved mainly by the socialisation of the Joint Stock Banks, accompanied by a drastic writing down of their "frozen" assets. The third aim is to stimulate home investment, and at the same time to limit overseas investment as nearly as possible to the real surplus available for this purpose, without cutting off such overseas loans (to India, for example) as are indispensable if we are to continue to receive the interest on our past lendings. This third aim involves considerations which would take me far beyond the scope of this article; but I shall hope to return to it at a later stage.

Briefly, I conclude that the indispensable first step towards this threefold policy is the complete socialisation of central and deposit banking—that is, of the Bank of England and of the "Big Five" Joint Stock Banks. Unless both these things are done, and done simultaneously, chaos is likely to result. For, if we try to nationalise only the Bank of England, we shall only start a disastrous tug-of-war for power between it and the Joint Stock Banks, whereas, if we socialise both the Bank and the Big Five, the control of the rest of the financial machine, while it presents big technical difficulties, will at once become a manageable problem. Nor will the State be able to take effective steps towards the rationalisation of industry until it has the Joint Stock Banks in its hands. On all accounts, therefore, socialisation of the key positions of the banking system is the necessary next step towards an effective policy of national planning and public control over economic affairs vital to the public interest.

G. D. H. COLE.

A LONDON DIARY

Thursday

THE memoirists of 1931 will be provided with material of an exciting richness not excelled by the records of 1914 or 1918–19. They will have to deal with personal events and decisions, with breaches and political bedfellows that were inconceivable before the August crash. While the life and miracles of Ramsay MacDonald must of necessity fill the most romantic chapters of the record, there will be no piece of tragic irony to surpass that furnished by Philip Snowden. Think of it. The first "Socialist" Chancellor of the Exchequer appears as a stern Yorkshire John Bull at The Hague in 1929. Within a few months he had destroyed the one hope of the Labour Government by blocking, in the name of sound finance, the entire programme of constructive national employment. In February, 1931, he warns the nation in hard and true words that it is heading for the abyss; in April he introduces a Budget that is condemned by the whole world as an attempt at dodging the inevitable collapse. In August he insists upon the gold standard as the sole basis of national security. In September he abandons it, assuring us that all is well.

* * *

We are more accustomed to changes on the part of Mr. Lloyd George. Now he seems to prefer anything to a Coalition Government. In the matter of tariffs, he confessed, in the famous assault upon Sir John Simon, he was never a joy to the orthodox, while Britain, of course, has known him as the supreme coalitionist. And yet, when in desperation those two complete free-traders, Sir Herbert and Sir Donald, go down to Churt with the formula that is to keep the National Government intact, we see what happens. Any split is possible, any alliance, and any lead.

* * *

What can now happen at the Round Table? The Prime Minister—turning aside, as his way is, at an acute moment of the home crisis—made a good speech in opening the Minorities Committee. But his appeals cannot modify the communal antagonism. The Moslems are a unit, and they know their strength in the face of the deep divisions of the Hindus. Mr. Gandhi stiffens them by his habit of making a test case of some point that he cannot carry, such as the demand that Dr. Ansari, the Moslem Nationalist, should join the Conference. It would not surprise anyone at St. James's Palace if Mr. Gandhi were to declare that he cannot go on, since Hindu-Moslem agreement seems to be as far off as ever, and even the Princes resist Federation. The Mahatma's position in London, by the by, must be different in every respect from his own expectation. His method in India has been private negotiation with the heads of Government, and that, of course, is impossible in England. A month's experience has shown that he is not stronger but weaker by himself than he would have been as leader of a representative group. Moreover, he needs the spotlight and is accustomed to it, and our press this autumn is otherwise engaged.

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If asked to name the most amazing specimen of old age in the English world one could hardly hesitate over the answer. Dr. Annie Besant enters upon her 85th year to-day, having been born on October 1st, 1847. For exactly half of this long life she has lived in India, as educationist, theosophical leader, and political agitator. She is essentially, perhaps altogether, a rhetorician. I have heard experienced judges assert that in sheer oratory Annie Besant surpassed all her contemporaries after the greatest Victorians who survived into the 'eighties. With that estimate I do not agree. She was always formal and had almost no light and shade. She was without humour, and after her quaint surrender to Madame Blavatsky her stuff

(as Jeremy Bentham said of something quite different) was "nonsense upon stilts." In the annals of modern delusion there can be nothing to set beside the pathetic fantasies of her last two decades, centring in the annunciation of a young Hindu Messiah who, when the elaborate game passed the limit, quietly and with notable curtness put an end to it. Since her continental air journeys at fourscore, Dr. Besant has remained very quiet. I rather like one notion held, it is said, by some non-Besantine theosophists—that her spirit was translated several years ago, leaving the white bodily shell to keep its wonted place in Madras.

* * *

The style of Disraeli's letters to the Queen with their wild elaboration of compliment and jest was Disraelian and nothing else. One surprise, however, of the Rosebery letters given in the advance chapters of Lord Crewe's biography is this: that Rosebery could and did write to the Queen with a pomposity which the England of forty years ago could never have associated with the wittiest of Prime Ministers. Here is a very curious example of Rosebery's manner. Lady Rosebery died in 1890. As a Rothschild she had held to the religion of her people. In a long letter acknowledging the Queen's sympathy this passage appears:

> There is, however, one incident of this tragedy only less painful than the actual loss; which is that at the moment of death the difference of creed makes itself felt, and another religion steps in to claim the corpse. It was inevitable, and I do not complain; and my wife's family have been more than kind. But none the less it is exquisitely painful.

Lord Crewe reveals the force of the pressure exerted upon Rosebery, by Mr. Gladstone and the Court, to compel his acceptance of the Foreign Office in 1892, by which time Gladstone had marked him as the next Liberal leader. Rosebery was extremely unhappy and was already in the grip of insomnia. His instinct to resist was right; but if he had stood firm then the last of his three ambitions could not have been fulfilled.

* * *

The B.B.C. has just published a most attractive little set of pamphlets to introduce their winter talks programme. The general title is "The Changing World." The most challenging of these seems to me to be Harold Nicolson's "New Spirit in Literature." It is very much alive; it really faces the question of what constitutes "modernity" in art, and discusses sensibly and frankly the significance of writers like D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce. Professor Levy's "Science in Perspective" is a good up-to-date introduction, Mr. Macmurray does well with the difficult task of making a discussion of education interesting. Professor Clay's account of our economic problems would not be bad if he did not omit the part of the subject which everyone just now is most excited about. Does attachment to the Bank of England really so sterilise a man—and a man of first-class ability—that he cannot even discuss banking? When every listener wants an account of the meaning of credit and the part played by banking in our national poverty here is one of the supposedly chief experts on the topic simply shying at the whole issue. It would be easier to understand if the pamphlet had been written after Professor Clay's notorious broadcast about the horrors of going off the gold standard, but presumably it was written before he had committed that particular ineptitude.

* * *

The political pamphlet "The Modern State" is by Mr. J. A. Hobson, and it is on the whole an excellent piece of work. Mr. Hobson is a thinker who increasingly comes into his own. In essentials he has been right while almost all his contemporaries have been wrong; he has insisted always that economics is the science of providing for human wants, not a branch of applied mathematics to be used for justifying things as they are. His latest book *Poverty in Plenty* (Allen and Unwin, 2s. 6d.) is just out. It exposes once again the lunacy of leaving the satisfaction of human wants to the interplay of blind forces, and urges, as Mr. Hobson has always urged, that one cannot divorce economics from ethics. One need not agree with the whole of Mr. Hobson's famous theory of "underconsumption" to find this a more useful introduction to economics than many much more pretentious pseudo-scientific volumes.

* * *

Woodrow Wilson, it will be remembered, was re-elected as President in 1916 on the slogan, "He kept us out of war." The younger professors of a famous American university, I hear, are making play with an election cry for the campaign of 1932, "Vote for Hoover: he kept us out of work!"

CRITIC.

RUSSIAN NOTES

I. THE WORKERS' STATE.

This is the first of a series of articles by Mr. C. M. Lloyd who has just returned from a visit to Russia as special correspondent of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

MOST Englishmen who go to Russia and come home to write about it are conscious enough of their handicaps. They know but little, if anything, of the language, and their time has been all too short. I do not pretend to be an exception to this rule. I am not fluent in Russian, and I do not set up as a pundit on the strength of a few weeks in Moscow and Leningrad and Nijni Novgorod. But that is not to say that all one's impressions and judgments are valueless. There are Russians as well as foreigners in the U.S.S.R. who talk English, and one does not go about deaf and dumb and blind. And what you can learn in a few weeks depends partly on what you knew before (and Russia, be it remembered, is not an unexplored land) and partly on how you use your time. As for the common gibe that "of course you only see what they want you to see," there is singularly little in it. Naturally a foreign visitor will not get in to a private meeting of the Politbureau or the Comintern, or be invited to watch the G.P.U. dealing with political prisoners. Would he be welcomed at a session of the British Cabinet or an administration of the "Third Degree" in America? For the rest, there is a great deal that the Russians cannot prevent you from seeing, even if they wished. And in general they are desperately anxious to show you everything they are doing. You may even visit places where you are not expected and where no preparations have been made to impress the bourgeois tourist. Nor do you find spies under your bed or dogging your footsteps to prevent conversation. Bolshevism has its darker side, and Russia is not England; but it is not Bogyland. So much by way of apology and justification for these scraps from a Russian notebook.

It is some twelve hundred miles by sea from London Bridge to Leningrad, and the week on board ship (for you will probably put into Hamburg for a couple of days to load cargo) makes an agreeable introduction to the U.S.S.R. The Soviet boat is comfortable without any pretension to luxury. The food is abundant and well cooked, ranging from caviare to roast goose, from sturgeon to pêche Melba. But nobody drinks cocktails or dresses for dinner. The real interest for the observant traveller, however, is not in the saloon and the passengers; it is in the crew. Soviet seamen and stokers and stewardesses do not, as some imagine, give orders to the captain, though they may address him as "Comrade." They do their job as quietly and effectively as any other sailors, but discipline does not appear to press hard on them. They have an air of "liberty, equality and fraternity." They are no longer the "lower classes." Some of them

come from the factory or the farm; some have been, and others are going to be, university students. They are all highly conscious of their importance as manual workers. They will play deck-tennis with the passengers, air their bit of English or let you air your bit of Russian, discuss the books they are reading. They will show you their quarters—cabins for two, replete with berths and bedclothes, cupboards, wash-basin and writing-table. On the deck astern is their mess room and "Red Corner," with bust of Lenin, pictures of Karl Marx, the progress of the Five Year Plan and the other usual stimuli and warnings to the Soviet citizen. Here you may play dominoes or dance to the gramophone or listen to a stewardess discoursing classical music on the piano. And when the voyage is over, nobody asks for or expects a tip. All this, though it might stagger an admiral of the old school or an habitué of the White Star Line, is not a very shocking aspect of the Revolution. Other and grimmer aspects await you ashore.

Leningrad is a fine city with a foul climate. It may be this climate, damp and cold, a prolific breeder of tuberculosis, that helps to give a serious look to the crowds that swarm in the streets, peer into the thinly stocked shop windows, and fight their way on to or off the incredibly packed tramcars. These crowds in Leningrad, in Moscow, in all the big towns, bring you sharp up against the new Russia, its character, its present discontents, its resolution and its hopes. The masses that move up and down the Nevsky Prospect, or the great thoroughfares in the heart of Moscow, are the "masses." There are no walking fashion plates—only workers in coats and shirts and skirts and shoes that have done long and hard service. It is as though the Grands Boulevards and the Rue de la Paix had been permanently occupied by the population of the Faubourgs. The bourgeoisie has been swept out, and the proletarian in the cloth cap and his family have flowed into its streets and its shops and its dwelling-places.

But all these millions of workers, who have been exalted in the new Republic, have yet to be satisfied. There is not enough house room; transport is inadequate and uncomfortable; there is a general scarcity of food and clothing and household necessaries. There is immense activity on all sides in building, in the remaking of roads, in the turning out of taxis and cars and lorries; there is even a project for an underground railway in Moscow. But it takes time and money to catch up with the immense and ever-growing demand. It is, of course, the food and clothing shortage that has been hardest to bear. Under the pressure of the Five Year Plan Russia has been forced to live in "war conditions," to ration itself for necessaries and to pay exorbitantly for anything in the nature of superfluity. I have seen toys offered for sale at 20 roubles (i.e., a couple of guineas) that would be worth a few shillings here; neckties for 10s. that you could get for eighteen-pence in the Mile End Road; soap at 5s. a cake. A young woman whose salary is £26 a month told me that she had paid nearly £10 for a pair of shoes.

The rationing system is carefully framed. The population is divided into categories, the highest of which is that of the manual workers (and with them are now joined the specialist or technician class). These and the children, for whose welfare the Soviet State is extremely solicitous, come off best. The articles covered by the ration-card (I am referring to Moscow last month) are bread, sugar, meat, fish, various cereals, butter, milk, tea and soap. The quantity of bread allowed is adequate—for the manual worker, at least, who gets 400 grammes (rather under a pound) of black and the same amount of white a day; office workers and children get half these quantities. The fish and meat might be more adequate, if they were there; but frequently the stores are short of supplies for days or weeks. The allowance of butter for the worker or the child is very limited, for others there is none—unless they choose to buy it outside the Co-op. at about 17s. a lb. Sugar, too, is severely rationed, and soap worst of all. Every citizen is entitled to one lump of toilet soap and the manual worker to half a kilogramme of laundry soap per month. These meagre rations may be, and of course are, supplemented by purchases outside—either in the "free market" where peasants or odd hucksters sell their produce at anything they can get for it, or in the State shops, where "commercial" prices are charged. But even there, supplies are shorter than they should be, and prices consequently higher, owing to several causes. There is a rising standard of life in the country as well as the towns, which means a greater consumption of food products at their source. There is the shortage of meat, due to the wholesale destruction of live-stock by the peasants in their first mad fury against collectivisation. There is the heavy export of butter and other comestibles in order to pay for the necessary imports of machinery and the rest. And lastly, there is the shortage of transport to get the stuff into the towns.

The pinch is obviously hard, though it is universally admitted that it has been eased this summer, and there is a hope of gradual improvement. But hard as it is, it would be a great mistake to imagine that the Russian people are in a mood of misery and dejection. The workers and the peasants are no longer "wage slaves" living at subsistence level. The average rise in real wages since 1914 is, I am told, seventy per cent. Whether that figure is accurate or not, the improvement is quite plainly enormous. Not only have earnings increased all round (and in many cases, under the piece-rate system, to undreamed-of figures), but communal provision and privileges have gone far. Pensions, medical treatment, holiday homes, free or cheap amusements, are all gains. Rents, for the manual worker in particular, are very moderate. Nor is his nourishment confined to what he buys in the store or the shop. Meals are provided in the dining rooms at the factories and the offices, and they are cheap and good. At one large works that I saw, the dinner consisted of soup, a meat or fish dish with vegetables, and a slice of water-melon, at a cost of about 9d. At another place, run by Centrosoyus, the Co-operative Union, for a whole group of factories, 20,000 dinners are provided every day, prepared by a staff of several hundred cooks and assistants with up-to-date machinery under the most elaborate hygienic conditions. The cost here was less than a shilling for a meal that would stand comparison with what I should have had to pay from ten to fifteen times as much for in my hotel.

The critic in Western Europe or America may raise an objection at this point. Granted, he will say, that the Russian worker has improved his material lot, and that he may still further improve it, yet he is living under a tyranny that allows him no genuine political rights, and aims at mechanising him into a robot. But is it not important to remember the history of the Russian worker and his difference in traditions and environment from his British and American brothers? It may be that one day he will want a Parliament after our fashion, and the freedom to throw bricks at his government. For the moment, however, there is no evidence that he does. The Revolution deprived him of no rights that he had before. On the contrary it gave him a new status, an equality that appears as a pre-eminence and—within certain limits, which may seem very large to him—liberties of speech and criticism, methods of expressing his will, that may be as good as, or better than, those enjoyed under a parliamentary democracy. The Soviet State, so far as one can judge, does not present itself to the worker (though it did till recently at least to the peasants) as a hard taskmistress or a cruel stepmother. He does not resent the mechanisation of industry and agriculture; he sees in it a new and glorious adventure, and the means of a larger life and culture. And, despite all his speeding up, he has not begun to think of himself as a robot

—and he certainly has not begun yet to shape like one. He believes in himself—sometimes a little too arrogantly—and he believes in his own and Russia's future. Elated by the hope of this future, pricked on by the fanatics of the Communist Party and by every form of propaganda, as well as by the incentive of higher earnings, he is working stolidly, cheerfully or enthusiastically at the Herculean task of the Five Year Plan. C. M. LLOYD.

SWALLOWS

THOUGH the evidence in regard to the matter is conflicting to the point of bewilderment, it is still possible to maintain that human beings are the most charming of the animals. The history of the race is a black one from the time of the murder of Abel till the wars and the revolutions of our own century, but through it all there has persisted the legend of something gentler than the normal barbarities of human endeavour—of Noah turning the Ark into a home for stray wild beasts, of Androcles and the lion, of Dick Whittington and his cat, of Crusoe and his parrot, of Sterne and the house-fly. Man's inhumanity to man has made countless thousands mourn; the number, indeed, has increased to millions since the words were written; but, by a noble contradiction in his nature, man, while being a wolf to his fellow-men, has again and again exhibited an extraordinary tenderness in his dealings with creatures of a different shape. There are those whom St. Francis's sermon to the birds makes sick; I am not one of them. I am all for the animal stories as the brightest patches in human history. It was a sound instinct in the Romans—the most practical of all the races—to remember the wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus, and the geese that saved the Capitol, as devotedly as the triumphs of the Scipios and the conquests of the Cæsars. No nation ever arrived at greatness unattended by one of the lower—the adjective, I know, is disputed—animals. Athens had her owl, and France her chanticleer; England had her white horse even before she found her lion; the history of Scotland is little known to the outside world, but every schoolchild has read the story of Bruce and the spider; and, within the memory of our grandfathers, America gave birth to an eagle. The thing that makes me most doubtful of the success of the Five-Year Plan in Russia is that the Bolsheviks, instead of choosing an animal—even an ant—as their symbol, have preferred to ally themselves to a sickle and a hammer.

I do not know whether the British Association has ever gone deeply into this question of the mystical relations that exist between man and the other animals. Many learned papers about Totemism have been read at its annual meetings, but all the learned men who have read these papers have taken it for granted that the people who believed in Totemism were intellectually imbecile. I certainly never read a paper by an anthropologist which gave me the impression that the writer looked on a member of the Wanga-Wanga tribe who believed in Totemism as his intellectual equal. It seems to be the rule among anthropologists to regard the Totemist as a savage counterpart of a Plymouth Brother—a dweller in darkness who believes all kinds of nonsense that no man who has taken a degree in science believes. Yet, surely, the Totemist is simply a man of science born in an unscientific civilisation—a prophet who realises that all life is one, and that man must somehow contrive to come to terms not only with other races of men, but with other races of animals. Is not the Totemist, who apologises to an animal before he kills it, nearer in spirit to the man of the future than our own butchers, who kill animals for our tables without an apology? Fortunately, even in our times, in spite of the anthropologists and in spite of the butchers, the legend of man's close and essential relationship with the other animals has still persisted, and we can read in Mr. Kipling's *Jungle Books* and *Just-So Stories*—marred as the last book is by an uncomprehending reference to a cat—secular truths which the anthropological section of the British Association neglects.

It is for the reader, rather than for me, to discover any relation between these remarks and the story that has reached us during the week from Vienna of the transportation of the swallows over the Alps by aeroplane. But it seems to me that in any History of Things Done for the First Time the story of the Viennese swallows will be the subject of one of the most delightful chapters. Snow, frost, and icy floods of rain had destroyed all the insect life on which the swallows lived in Austria, and had done so before the swallows could leave for Africa. All over Austria swallows ceased to twitter. No longer did they swoop over the streams, their throats crimson in the sunset, their beaks blue as an Atlantic bay in summer. They had no food, they were cut off by the stormy Alps from food, and they settled down on telephone wires, or wherever they could perch, to droop and to die. This is not, apparently, a sentimentalised picture; it is plain fact. Then some genius—in other words, somebody who thought of something practical—conceived the notion that, if the swallows could be collected from the foul weather, they could be sent by the ten thousand in aeroplanes over the Alps and into the sunshine, where they could kill as many million insects as they pleased and live like gourmets on their way back to Africa. Immediately, everybody in Austria began to collect swallows, as who in the same circumstances would not? According to the story in the press, children who had not themselves enough to eat trudged through the slush, carrying the birds in baskets to central depots, where long wires had been stretched on which the feeble creatures could rest, waiting till they were caged and sent south by aeroplane. According to some accounts, maggots were collected for the birds; according to others, the birds, being unable to collect their own food on the wing, sat starving on the wires till they were packed for Italy. Whatever the facts of this part of the story may be, it is reasonably well attested that at the end of last week several thousands of swallows had been collected into cages and had by means of aeroplanes been rescued from starvation in Austrian snow and borne over the Alps, to be loosed among the unmindful insects of Venice. One estimate of the number of swallows saved in this fashion puts the figure at forty thousand. And, what is a particularly agreeable part of the story, Signor Mussolini, for all his fierce expression, issued an edict that, in the country of St. Francis, the lives of the swallows were to be respected, and that the fugitives must not be shot or otherwise captured in order to be made the ingredients of "swallow pie."

Who, on reading such a story, could doubt the fundamental excellence of human nature? It was a little cruel, perhaps, to the insects of Italy to loose on them a horde of birds of prey whom Nature in her entomophily was about to extirpate. But we, who in the chain of evolution are so much nearer the bird than the insect, cannot be expected to share this point of view. We, like the swallows, are fragile creatures, continually at war with insects; and though we spare the butterfly and the afternoon spider, we are enemies to the mosquito, the flea, the daddy-long-legs, and even the lovely wasp. Life is all one, we (being philosophers) admit, but we have not yet discovered our unity with the louse. Hence, we do not feel censorious of the swallow, as, skimming over the stream, he gathers a hundred insects into his gullet and, winging towards his infants, shares his prey with them.

Anyhow, I contend that the Viennese, in their treatment of the swallows, are exquisitely charming, and a model to all human beings in their treatment of each other. I do not wish to preach—which means that I do wish to preach

—but ——. The strange thing is that I felt more deeply excited about the fate of those thousands of Austrian swallows than I felt about the fate of those hundreds of thousands of Chinese who perished or were left penniless after the recent floods. It may be that the salvation of a few swallows is a problem that we feel we can successfully tackle, while the salvation of human beings is so large a problem that we give it up in despair. Or it may be that it is pure sentimentalism to worry about either. Be that as it may, I hold that the Viennese who took the trouble to save the lives of the swallows are pleasanter to read about than Cain, who murdered Abel, or than Achilles, who maltreated the body of Hector. From this I draw the conclusion that the world has improved, is improving, and will improve. Y. Y.

THE TRUTH ABOUT TARIFFS

WITH the aid of Jevons on logic and of *Alice in Wonderland*,
I have studied the case for a tariff: it runs, as I understand,
That tariffs are good for employment—which is why you will find to-day
So many millions of workless all over the U.S.A.;
That the crisis is international, and that much of the blame must fall
On the folk who hampered exchanges by building a tariff wall—
So to help the world to recover, and give the markets a tone,
We must clearly come to the rescue with a tariff wall of our own;
That a tariff was chiefly needed, as all the experts have found,
To offset costs of production that were tied to a gold-rate pound—
So it must be much more essential now the gold rate has had to go
And the lessened value of sterling makes the costs of production low;
That the tariff isn't an issue, since a bargain can soon be made
By the hot-heads of high Protection with the stalwarts of pure Free Trade—
They need but accept it in outline (for the details are best concealed)
As a purely emergency measure—that never must be repealed;
That the arguments don't much matter, for even if it were shown
We could only deal with the crisis by leaving tariffs alone,
The hot-heads of high Protection would tell us, and feel no doubt,
That the crisis itself don't matter, if it brings a tariff about.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

GOING OFF GOLD

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your last issue you twit the Government with having failed to maintain the gold standard. Do you not perhaps underestimate the plausibility of the view, which will be that of many of your readers, that if this measure is the misfortune of the Government, it is the fault of the Opposition? And so far as I am aware, no advocate of inflation has hitherto contemplated with approval its taking place against the will of the majority of the House of Commons.—Yours, etc., M. S. AMOS.

Ulpha, Near Broughton-in-Furness.

[We do not think the Opposition was responsible for sending us off the gold standard. Informed opinion had regarded it as almost inevitable for some weeks before the crisis arose. The only real question was whether we should go off gold while there was still an apparent chance of our remaining at our old parity or whether it was more honourable to wait until we had made every effort by raising credits abroad to remain on. The last point seems trivial. If the Government had decided in August to go off gold there was no more difficulty in summoning Parliament to sanction their decision then than there was in summoning it to get the same sanction in September. Ed., *N. S. & N.*]

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Recent events have been marked by a gathering volume of criticism directed against the post-war policy of the monetary authorities in Europe and the U.S.A.

This criticism has arisen from the fear that the aim of monetary policy has been the collection of debt rather than the distribution of commodities. A physician, however distinguished, will not long continue his practice if he appears to be more interested in collecting fees from his patient than in curing him. Authority, whether in medicine or in monetary matters, is only respected when its claims are limited by its duty to serve those who are ruled.

The world now suffers from financial poverty in spite of an immense increase in the ability to produce what individuals require. If the monetary authorities face this fact boldly, they will quickly regain the credit they have undoubtedly lost. The suspension of the gold standard may indicate their intention to adapt monetary policy to the needs of the world by correcting the deficiency in the consumers' purchasing-power which is clearly the root cause of stagnant industry and trade.—Yours, etc.,

Woodlands, Maldon, Essex. W. ALLEN YOUNG.

THE RETURN TO BARTER

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Is it not time to get away from the scare mentality associated with the words dumping and barter? Is there not an important solution key hidden away in that simple but significant international transaction between Brazil and the U.S. Farm Control Board? If the 1,050,000 bags of coffee had been landed upon the U.S. market at whatever price it would have brought it would have been dumping, and the same if, transversely, the 50,000,000 bushels of wheat had been sent to Brazil. A sensible agreement to exchange these surpluses made all the difference, and what would have been regarded in trade as an economic crime became, because of agreement for neutral advantage, a monument of common sense exercised for the common good.

Is it not clear that the world, if it determines to avoid red ruin, has *got* to rationalise dumping and barter? Of course it has to be on big controlled lines. And one cannot see that it can work with freedom upon a fixed price basis. Rather it would seem that here is a sphere for the legitimate working of the law of supply and demand, public control for the public weal being the preventer of speculative exploitation. This, surely, would not be Churchill's reversion to barbarism but a distinct advance towards sanity. The international credit bank would credit and debit the exchanges, and triangular transactions would be as simple as the direct and elementary. Why the present repetition of the post-war economy craze whilst the urgent need of rational maximum consumption again stares at us with bolting eyes?!!

Yours, etc.

Hemel Hempstead. JESSE HAWKES.

ONLY A WORD

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—With reference to "Y.Y.'s" article, there is little doubt that the word "alien" is irritating to Americans precisely because it does put people of a common speech and people who treasure what is in large part a common tradition on the same basis as foreigners who are entire aliens. No Canadian, for example, although he may take pride in describing himself, in the new Canadian phraseology, as a "Canadian citizen" would be either complimented or even indifferent, despite "Y.Y.," were he described as an alien. In the United States few things are more gratifying to the visiting Englishman than to look up such a publication as the *World Almanac* and there to find the information about countries catalogued under the headings "United States," "British Empire" and (a third, separate category) "Other Foreign Countries." Let us foster that spirit.

As to the word "subject," it is surely full time that Socialist Governments set to work to substitute, in official documents, a phrase less absolute, less misleading and, in essence, less uncomplimentary, derogatory and dangerous to the nature of our monarchy.—Yours, etc.,

19, Glebe Place, Chelsea, S.W.3. GEORGE G. G. CATLIN.

THE MOSLEY PARTY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—As one who has joined the New Party, which Mr. Strachey left and, like him, joined it from another party, I have found his views of considerable interest. As far as I remember his resignation took place largely because he believed that Sir Oswald Mosley was organising British youth to take part in violent and possibly revolutionary action. To-day we who were condemned for our revolutionary tendencies awake to find the judge himself counselling revolution. This is indeed a remarkable paradox and, as one of the condemned persons, I am ready to take this opportunity of rebuking my former judge

Mr. Strachey appears to think that Soviet Russia would take the chance offered by the establishment of a British Provisional (or Soviet?) Government to show her proletarian brotherhood by feeding our people when the capitalist States refused. However, he seems to forget the pledges of the Russian Government to help the struggling Eastern masses against the foreign Imperialist. Civil war and the interruption of communications it would cause must prove too good an opportunity for Indian firebrands to provoke a so-called national rising against Britain in India. Pledges to the Eastern peoples and self-interest (which is the stronger Russian motive of the two) are sure to make Russia go to aid the Asiatic revolutionaries under those same circumstances. If that should happen would—or could—the Russians assist us?

For my own part I would maintain that such action must prove wholly impossible. Japan, who has all but clashed with Russia over recent Manchurian troubles, is not likely to watch her gaining a foothold in our Indian Dominions. The result would be a war between these two countries and, once that began, Russia would devote her time to wartime activities and not to any proletarian benevolence for Mr. Strachey's "comrades." Under those circumstances the German Communist uprising and the German nation would be dealt with thoroughly by France, since deprived of any risk of British intervention she would march forward with her allies to the capture of fresh territory (including the coveted Rhineland) and overrun the country, as calculated by Ludendorff, within a few weeks in addition to destroying European peace by a war with Italy and probably several other nations also.

A conflict in the East between Russia, Japan, and possibly the United States (ending in untold devastation and the not wholly unwelcome overthrow of the Soviet by revolution) and another conflict in the West (accompanied by black troop atrocities and the less welcome re-establishment of Napoleonism in Europe) are the prospects opened up by the revolution suggested by Mr. Strachey. Moreover, while these other lands made history, an isolated Britain would wage civil war and starve.

Such an outlook does not appeal even to the Hitler-ridden mind of a New Party supporter like myself. Instead, I prefer to help my own organisation to move towards the establishment of a strong Government that will bring much-needed social and economic change. In taking this safer, slower and—no doubt—less daring and romantic course I part company with the Icarian Mr. Strachey, even as I part company with him also over the matter of possible party allegiances.—Yours, etc.,

10, Sudbury Hill, Harrow. PATRICK M. MOIR.

(Ex-Chairman, Harrow Divisional Liberal Association and South Harrow Liberal Federation).

SARCASM IN HYDE PARK

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In his description of my efforts a few weeks ago to convert the visitors to Hyde Park to my *then* very heterodox views on finance, your contributor "Critic" writes of me as "ironically beseeching the foreigner not to take his money out of England and then, with a quick transition, shaking his fist and *demanding tariffs to protect us against the wicked foreigner who wanted to trade with us.*"

May I be allowed to make it clear (the dangers of sarcasm!—or was it "the noise of other speakers"?) that I was satirising some of the advocates of Protection?—Yours, etc.,

London, N.1. DONALD STEWART.

"A RECIPE FOR EPSTEIN"

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—At a time when the bunglers who have for long assumed control of British destinies are making a rather sheepish appearance in the dock, your Miscellany gives "D.X." the opportunity of throwing a brick at the least socially responsible of all persons—the artist.

There is something profoundly unfair in the easy-going banter of "A Recipe for Epstein," if only because a tired mind might believe it to be true; and the artist—examining at first hand and seeing the weeklies but intermittently—is unlikely himself to reply.

What does your miscellanist want?

Mr. Jacob Epstein to be less Victorian; Mr. Henry Moore to be less individual; Mr. Henry Moore to carve no heads "with knobs on" (he never has); sculptors to abandon "whimsies of feeling and refinements of appreciation" in a separate world of the mind; hospital wards to carry sculped friezes which, with the help of a night-light, will exorcise attacks of acute illness in the small hours; carvings to line railway cuttings and embankments; Rabelaisian dockers to sit in carved pub seats; armies of sculptors to raid the building estates round London and carve "a real city beautiful."

Let "D.X." face realities as a sculptor has to face half a ton of strong-grained stone. The artist is only too anxious to work: he works even when he knows that his output (which the twentieth century regards as a luxury) stands a dwindling chance of earning him bread, butter and tobacco in such times as these. If he does not rush out to the parklands of Hertfordshire to help the builder to build clerks' dormitories, the immediate reason is that the builder, the clerks and their wives, the estate owner, the plan-passing local council, the grant-making Ministry of Health, the taxpayers who keep the Ministry, the Government who run it and the Parliament that controls the Government—all these would see the sculptor in the workhouse before they had anything to do with him. In the rare instances in which (*a*) a public body and (*b*) an architect are in their right mind in the matter, the sculptors are forthcoming.

So much for the serious element in the criticism of "D.X." But does he know that drinking dockers don't sit down; that if you suggest a docker is Rabelaisian your pelvis will be fractured by a tin-toed clog; that if railway cuttings are decorated with sculpture the passenger will see only a moving blur; that this devil of decoration is responsible for the worst furniture shops of Tottenham Court Road; that most sculptors have had years of digestive "roughage" because they could afford no better; and that if a miscellanist believes in "blowing up the civilisation of retired colonels and other 'haw haws' with tin trumpets and ticklers," he has but to visit the better art shows, where that task, though often badly, is often sincerely done?

And if we agree to suppress mere "whimsies of feeling and refinements of appreciation," there would be precious little NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—and no Miscellany at all.—Yours, etc.,

60, Upper Gloucester Place, N.W.1. ROBERT SINCLAIR.

September 27th.

THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—May I ask what reasons "Critic" has for his complacent notice of the work of the Pitt and Clarendon Presses? For instance, how many of the theses for which degrees have been granted at Oxford during the past five years have been printed by the Clarendon Press? I know of two philosophical theses for which the authors were recently given the doctor's degree. One thesis was described as the first authoritative work in English on its subject—one of the greatest of French philosophers. Neither was published by the Press, which, in a word, cannot or will not publish anything that is not profitable or popular. It was apparently naught to the Press that the University would gain great honour, if little profit, from the publication of such theses.—Yours, etc.,

The Chilterns, STEPHEN D. USHERWOOD.
Worting Road, Basingstoke.

["Critic" says: "Thank Heaven, the English University Presses do not publish many academic theses. Only a small proportion are worth publishing. About the merits of the examples Mr. Usherwood selects I cannot, of course, judge, but if he studies the outpourings of American University

Presses he will soon cease to advocate the indiscriminate publication of Ph.D theses."—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

ARTIFICIAL SILK INDUSTRY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

Sir,—In reply to the letter from Sir William Willcox and Dr. Roche Lynch, all I need say is that evidence will be tendered to the Home Office Committee, now sitting, on Industrial Diseases (including poisoning by sulphuretted hydrogen gas and its sequelæ), by spinners compelled to give up their employment on account of the "occasional transient and temporary irritation of the eyes" as the writers of the letter describe it.

No statutory Home Office Regulations apply to the use of carbon di-sulphide in the "churn" room, as is implied in the letter.—Yours, etc.,

"Wintergreen," T. M. LEGGE.
Westhall Road,
Upper Warlingham, Surrey.
September 28th.

D'ANNUNZIO

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I was much interested in your contributor Richard Sunne's article on D'Annunzio (September 19th), which confirms the impression derived from a very slender acquaintance with his work. But I should have liked to see a word about the short stories which were, I believe, among his earliest publications and which seem to show that he was capable of better things. The volume, I believe, is called *San Pantaleone*, and the two stories of which I have the liveliest memory are that which gives the title to the book (a wonderful picture of a feud between two Calabrian towns in which the protagonists are the respective patron saints—a strange Greek survival, also depicted, with less force, in Verga's *Guerra di Santi*), and Annali d'Anna, which, perhaps, would not have been written but for Flaubert's *Cœur Simple*, but it struck me at the time as having more colour and a warmer human touch. All the more pity for his later development.—Yours, etc.,

74, Parkway. A. WERNER.
Welwyn Garden City.
September 25th.

Miscellany

MUSIC AMONG THE SCIENTISTS

MY acquaintance with scientists procured me an invitation to the Faraday Commemorative Meeting at the Queen's Hall on September 21st, when the usual Promenade Concert was suspended for the historic celebration of the centenary of Michael Faraday's discovery, on August 29th, 1831, in the Royal Institution at Albemarle Street, of the principle of electro-magnetic induction.

At this commemoration meeting, which was opened by the Prime Minister, music played a considerable role. There was, indeed, no other representative of the arts or the muses present—unless we may consider Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as representing RHETORIC. Why music should have been thus honoured, why no painter flourished his brush, why no cartoonist, no David Low drew on a scientific blackboard his impressions of Michael Faraday, why no poet read his verses denouncing the evils of electric light and deploring the impossibility of seeing the stars by night in any modern city since Faraday's diabolic discovery, nobody has asked. The fact is that science decided on this occasion to admit one art only to its festive world-wide gathering, and nobody noticed the singularity of this honour done to the art of music. To the organ piping of Bach and the trumpeting of Purcell, world-famous scientists filed upon the platform of the Queen's Hall in the presence of a crowded and excited audience—the proof that it was excited I will give later. On the platform facing the audience sat the Marchese Marconi, M. le Duc de Broglie, member of a famous French scientific family; Professor Elihu Thomson (an Englishman representing America), Lord Rutherford (a Colonial representing England), and other eminent scientists English and foreign. Behind this scientific row sat Sir Henry Wood and the B.B.C. orchestra. The scientists made speeches and the musicians played music, and the words and the tones were broadcast over the world by devices for which Faraday and his followers from Clerk Maxwell to Marconi are responsible.

As I sat listening to a programme consisting of the prelude to Act III of *Lohengrin*, Brahms's Academic Festival Overture, Elgar's "Dorabella" variation, the Scherzo from Mendelssohn's Octet and Bach's Suite No. 6 for orchestra, I marvelled at the adroitness with which Sir Henry Wood had mixed his ingredients for what was, presumably, a non-musical audience. The music was enthusiastically applauded. There was no sign whatever of that impatience and boredom which an audience shows when the real matter of its gathering together is interrupted by irrelevant entertainment. This scientific gathering obviously listened to the music with such real enjoyment that I, a great admirer of Faraday, began to feel very uneasy. And I felt uneasy because, in my opinion, what they were listening to with such obvious enthusiasm was not music at all.

Whether it was that Sir Henry Wood and his fellow-musicians were so thrilled by the occasion and so excited by the presence of Marconi and Rutherford and their famous colleagues that they surpassed their own knowledge of themselves, or whether they were determined to show that Bach, Wagner, and Brahms were as big men as Faraday and Co., I do not know; all I know is that I was driven out of the hall into the corridor by the infernal din they made. The attack made by the musicians upon the scientists varied in its ferocity. The main assault was in the third movement of the Bach Suite, where the concentration of forces was absolutely hellish. No artist could have remained alive in such an uproar and, as I have said, at this moment, this Verdun of music. I fled for safety into the passage where I felt like a *pioupiou* in a very vulnerable dug-out during Armageddon.

However, when I returned to the hall I found that every scientist was left alive. Not a face showed the slightest sign of the terrible ordeal which they had undergone. On the contrary, they were all smiling.

What conclusion was I to come to? Are scientists entirely different to ordinary men? Can it be that centuries of impartial concentration upon the observation of phenomena have made them immune from all sensation? Or is their impartiality so great that all music is noise and all noise music to their ears, and that what they were really doing in the Queen's Hall that evening while the orchestra was playing was measuring the sound-waves, estimating the variation in over-tones, calculating the degree of resonance and the acoustical properties of the Queen's Hall? Or, perhaps, since all branches of science may have been represented there, there were biologists present who were absorbed in the problem of Sir Henry Wood's cranium. How many cubic centimetres did it contain? This, indeed, might show some light on the hidden constitution of music. For who knows what music is? Mere sound-waves, periodic noises? I must confess I am completely at a loss to give any description of music that will fit all the diverse manifestations which masquerade under its name. Where am I to put the phenomena that took place that evening of September 21st at the Queen's Hall? No scientific description, however full or accurate, of the sound waves that filled the hall or emanated from that hall can possibly describe the events that happened there. I am forced to conclude that although the scientists can light our streets they cannot light our or their own brains. Electric arc-lamps may guide our feet over the puddles in the road, but no amount of magnetic induction will enable a gathering of scientific electricians to know whether they are listening to music or

not. In case, therefore, that any scientist present at the Queen's Hall on that memorable occasion is under the illusion, magnetic or hypnotic, or by any other process of mere *mass* suggestion (scientists mark the pun, please!), that he was listening to music, I have written this article to inform him politely that there was no music at the Queen's Hall on that famous night. There were present musicians, but no music; scientists, but no science; for both music and science are more difficult to come by. They are hidden and inaccessible like the goddesses whom the Greeks worshipped but rarely if ever saw.

W. J. TURNER.

MAMMONIAC ODE

I

HARK, hark, the Mark in the Money Market sings!
And sweet Swiss francs in Bernese Banks
Yodel to Mammon a million thanks
For swift and profitable flight on funded wings.
To Mammon's face of many facets,
"Firm in tone," they raise their song;
"Fluctuant Bonds and Frozen Assets
Unto us no more belong."

II

Toll for the brave,
Gold Standard sunk beneath the European wave.
For Britain's Gold Redemption Policy suspended,
And the Parity of the Pound (Alas, poor Yorick!) ended,
Lament from fiscal throats,
O patriot Five-Pound Notes;
And let your dirge with Wage Reductions be well blended.

III

O Franco-franc, O Dollar, and O Florin,
Exceed your rights, ferocious-fanged and foreign!
Pengo, Peseta, and Colonial Pound,
Abjure your mineral ancestry, and be
More glorious than mere gold from underground;
Soar; sag; and more portentously unsound;
Cause all the trouble you can; but O—be free!

IV

Finally, O English Dictionary, this conundrum settle,
And aid me to be poet-laureate of the aureate. . . .
"Non-rusting yellow malleable ductile metal
"Of high specific gravity;" (*as good as gold.*)
"Gold can be foil or dust or leaf; beaten or rolled.
"Coins made of this. Money in specie. Bullion. Wealth."
Gold this; gold that. Pure gold. Gold cannot buy good health.
Gold plate. Resources. Interest. Incomes. Power of purchase.
Pays Unemployment. Buys Champagne, and builds new churches. . . .
The finest Sport on earth is job-stock Speculation. . . .
Deliver us, O Lord, from Currency Inflation.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Foolish Virgin

AT the Arts Theatre one of the best actresses to be seen in London is wasting her time in what must be one of the worst plays to be seen anywhere. Why Miss Mary Newcomb spends her time on Mr. Kelly's lamentable *Behold the Bridegroom* is not her own business: she has no right to squander her talents. Antoinette (who is 27 years old) has the manners of spoilt thirteen and the mind of uneducated, but capable, seven. For ten years she has jazzed, drank, whored, flirted and evaded all responsibilities by the aid of a colossal income and a fool of a father who keeps a palace for her on Long Island. (The play is of the U.S.A.) For two years or more she has made Gehring Fitler dance to her whims; back home from a quarrelsome time in Europe Tony meets her doom in Spencer Train, a clean, hard-working man. He dislikes her, she adores him and apparently dies for love of him. The play is a strange mixture of Pansy's stories, and *The Hard-Boiled Virgin*; the style is pure Family Herald. Miss Newcomb cannot help looking lovely, and has some moments for emotional acting—no other member of the cast has a chance with Mr. Kelly's dreadful dialogue and jejune situations.

Marx Brothers

In *Monkey Business* (at the Carlton) they are let loose on an Atlantic liner and scramble everywhere, from the hold to the barber's shop and the captain's state-room. Perhaps they are not as funny as before: the first shock of seeing this extraordinary troop of clowns has diminished, and they are in danger now of becoming merely pet monkeys whose antics we applaud. Groucho's current parody of authority, his businessman-social-lion patter, has become less vivid, though he has developed a marvellous new jungle style of tango-dancing. Even Harpo, the genius of the troupe, though he is still dumb, loses at times the expressive shining idiocy which gave *Animal Crackers* its astonishing fantasy. *Monkey Business* is still an extremely amusing film, crammed with jokes and quick comic situations, but it lacks the touch of sheer limerick absurdity which the Marx brothers at their best can give. If an American director could be found who understood that their humour consists in a complete disregard of the physical world, if he would set them eating telephones again, stealing birthmarks, and mimicking the whole world of solemnity and conventions and catch-phrases, they would be the best lunatic clowns imaginable. They are the creatures of moonshine, and in *Monkey Business* some of the shine has gone. It is there in the episodes when Harpo gets mixed up with a Punch and Judy show and gets puppet knocks from all sides, and when he sits watching the faces of two chess-players; but too often through the film they are merely being scampered through their old, and entertaining, tricks.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, October 3rd—
- London String Quartet, Wigmore Hall, 3.
- King Saul. Performance by The Caldecott Community, Rudolf Steiner Hall, 8.30.

Sunday, October 4th—
- Dr. Bernard Hollander on "Ancient and Modern Methods of Mental Healing," Conway Hall, 11.
- Mischa Elman, Violin Recital, Queen's Hall, 3.
- "The Glory of the Sun" by J. Brandon-Thomas, Fortune Theatre.
- "From the Four Winds," by Oliver Baldwin, Embassy Theatre.

Monday, October 5th—
- "Salome" by Oscar Wilde, Savoy Theatre.

Tuesday, October 6th—
- "The Queen's Husband" by Robert E. Sherwood, Ambassadors Theatre.
- Paderweski Recital, Queen's Hall, 8.
- Musical Festival, Leeds.

Wednesday, October 7th—
- "1066 and All That," dramatised by Michael Watts, Festival Theatre, Cambridge.
- "The Anatomist," by James Bridie, Westminster Theatre.

Thursday, October 8th—
- "Vile Bodies," by Evelyn Waugh, Arts Theatre.
- "For the Love of Mike," Savile Theatre.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

BAUDELAIRE asserted that happiness was nothing but shutting one's eyes; and for cynics and sentimentalists the recipe has sufficed before his day and since. The contrary suggestion that for true happiness one's eyes must be open and kept open, in spite of all risks, has never been followed except by saints and poets—and not by all of them. It was reading Robert Burns' letters in the fine new edition of Mr. Ferguson (Oxford University Press, 2 vols. 30s.) that brought the French poet's saying to my mind; for surely never did a man so live by the shut-eye as did Burns. I think it must be that which has made him the national man of letters of Scotland, a position which an outsider would give unhesitatingly to Walter Scott. I do not think anyone can dispute the fact that, whatever else their merits, both the theology and the church government of post-reformation Scotland are remarkable examples of supreme and successful shut-eyedness. Burns shut his eyes to very different objects and ideas from those which were not allowed to trouble the vision of John Knox or Robert Buchanan or Thomas Carlyle; and his blindness is other than Stevenson's or Barrie's—but in no country have there been so many great men who followed the advice of Baudelaire. Scott, who rarely refused to keep his eyes open, has his enthusiasts in his own country; but scarcely the devotees who still pile offerings on the shrines of Burns and Carlyle. In them they recognise at its best and worst the great national trait of voluntary blindness, the capacity, exalted to the height of genius, to forget while the injured forgive, to rebuke others without any morbid recourse to self-examination or self-improvement.

* * *

To talk bawdy in the inn-bar and elegancies in the drawing-room, and to be equally successful in both enterprises, is not within the power of every man. To have a mission against hypocrites and a rare power of scotching them, yet at the same time to be a comfortable sinner oneself, though also excelling in the practice of family prayers, is, again, not within every man's compass. They are feats almost as remarkable as to be an excise-man and yet popular, or an original poet and a magnificent botcher of old verses. Burns was all these. It is absurd to claim for him a position with the great poets of the world; even in the making of songs he is excelled by Shakespeare and Heine, and equalled by many lesser and some unknown men. His satire is perhaps the most poetical vernacular satire that we have; the vigorous indignation of *Holy Willie's Prayer* and *The Jolly Beggars* is worthy of Villon, and without that greater poet's cruelty of malice. But verse-satire is not great poetry, and great poetry is not often found in Burns' work. Nor does he rank with the greatest letter writers, either English or French. In some letters to his cronies he exhibits a fine masculine style, gay colour and a robust humour which the present editor only modifies when the poet breaks away into rather too ribald a catch for the solemnity of an Oxford edition—though some surprising words and lines have gained admittance. But one would look in vain here for the tense, imaginative inquiry of John Keats; and beside Byron's untroubled ease Burns seems at times a little mannered, just as his high spirits are a little too much of the bothie—though he was naturally and always a gentleman, a condition rarely achieved by Byron. The letters are extraordinarily good reading, and many of them are invaluable as documents of social life in the days when Edinburgh was really a capital, and Scotsmen had not thought it necessary to come on a mission of information and culture to the lesser metropolis on the Thames.

Like all who believe in shutting the eyes, Burns was very different to different correspondents. Most of us find the need of adjusting our style to those to whom we are speaking or writing; but few correspondents can have practised this so much as did Burns. The great letter-writers, Walpole, FitzGerald, Cowper, Byron, Sévigné, Wortley Montagu, made little distinction except that natural to the degree of their familiarity with the correspondent. Burns goes much farther than this. He not only writes quite differently when his correspondent is a woman; he can write pure mechanical exercises. Of these are his only really tiresome letters, most of those addressed to "Clarinda," Mrs. Agnes Mary M'Lehose—but then, with her Burns is play-acting more than usual . . . there is a patch on his cheek when he starts talking to Clarinda:

> Do not let us impose on ourselves by sounds: if in the moment of fond endearment and tender dalliance, I perhaps trespassed against the *letter* of Decorum's law; I appeal, even to you, whether I ever sinned in the very least degree against the *spirit* of her strictest statute.—But why, My Love, talk to me in such strong terms; every word of which cuts me to the very soul? . . . O Love and Sensibility, ye have conspired against my Peace! I love to madness, and I feel to torture! Clarinda, how can I forgive myself that I have ever touched a single chord in your bosom with pain! would I do it willingly? Would any consideration . . .

And so on. It is a pure following of the conversation in the comedy of manners, and one can only hope that it gratified the lady, while one grieves that Burns should write, read and rewrite such artificial stuff. A very different Burns is to be found in the letters to Mrs. Dunlop, and in letters to men friends. There is a bitter raciness in a letter to John Beugo, the Engraver:

> The only things that are to be found in this country, in any degree of richness, are Stupidity and Canting. Prose, they only know in Graces, Prayers, etc., and the value of these they estimate, as they do their plaiding webs—by the Ell; as for the Muses, they have as much idea of a Rhinoceros as of a Poet. For my old, capricious but good-natured hussy of a Muse—
>
> By banks of Nith I sat and wept,
> When Coila I thought on;
> In midst thereof I hung my harp
> The willow trees upon—
>
> I am generally about half my time in Ayrshire, with my "Darling Jean," and then I, *at lucid intervals*, throw my horny fist across my be-cobwebbed Lyre, much in the same manner as an old wife throws her hand across the spokes of her Spinning Wheel. . . . You do not tell me if you are going to be married. Depend upon it, if you do not make some damned foolish choice, it will be a very great improvement on the Dish of Life.—I can speak from experience though, God knows, my choice was as random as Blind-man's Buff. I like the idea of an honest country Rake of my acquaintance, who, like myself, married lately. Speaking to me of his late step, "L—d, man," says he, "a body's baith cheaper and better sair't!"

* * *

There is Burns the man, just as Burns the poet is to be found in the Scots poems, not in the exercises in elegant English, when he moves delicately spancelled on a limited and exiguous ground. He is the poet who, excepting a few world-masters, touches the needs and the lives of the average man as greater and purer poets do not always manage to do. He is what every average carnal man would like to be, a fine fellow convinced of his own nobility in spite of all awkward evidence to the contrary. If he felt that his way of living harden'd all within, he at least kept his ability to make something lovely out of his disgrace and his shame. That is where Burns has it over us; that is what we admire in him. We are all of us selfish and advocates of the shut-eye; but Burns had the rare luck that, as he turned a trifle impatiently from a girl who had the misfortune "to make him a father," he saw not mere wantonness with that open eye, but the poets' Helen, the lady who left Troy to be worshipped in Egypt, the Queen who strikes with complete and desolate blindness those who defame her or are false to her obedience.

RICHARD SUNNE.

LOGIC

The Foundations of Mathematics. By F. P. RAMSEY. Kegan Paul. 15s.

Logic, like lyrical poetry, is no employment for the middle-aged, and it may be that we have in this volume some of the best illumination which one of the brightest minds of our generation could give, though he died at 26. I do not think that there is any book of equal importance for those who would think about fundamental matters in a modern way, and the circumstance that much of it is tentative and inconclusive and not finally corrected is no impediment in a subject where an author's vanity in giving his finished work a rounded surface is pure deception.

Seeing all of Frank Ramsey's logical essays published together, we can perceive quite clearly the direction which his mind was taking. It is a remarkable example of how the young can take up the story at the point to which the previous generation had brought it a little out of breath, and then proceed forward without taking more than about a week thoroughly to digest everything which had been done up to date, and to understand with apparent ease stuff which to anyone even ten years older seemed hopelessly difficult. One almost has to believe that Ramsey in his nursery near Magdalene was unconsciously absorbing from 1903 to 1914 everything which anyone may have been saying or writing in Trinity. In the year 1903, in which Frank Ramsey was born, Bertrand Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* was published, giving a new life to formal logic and seeming to bring new kingdoms within its scope. This book raised certain fundamental problems without solving all of them satisfactorily, but for the next seven years Russell and Whitehead were more concentrated on the technical problem of exhibiting in their *Principia Mathematica* the actual links between mathematics and formal logic than on strengthening the foundations on which they were building. But meanwhile, Ludwig Wittgenstein had been attracted to Cambridge by the desire to talk with Russell, and Wittgenstein was wholly occupied with the fundamental matters of logical analysis. His *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* was mainly worked out before the war, but it was not published until 1922, by which time Frank Ramsey was on the scene, aged nineteen, to assist in the preparation of an English version and to expound its obscure contents to the world. To-day Russell is recognising that each period of life has its appropriate avocation, and that the fundamental exercises of logic are not for those who have reached their sixtieth year. Wittgenstein is wondering if his next book will be finished before time's chariots are too near, and Ramsey, alas! who entered into their harvest as easily as a young lord into his estates, is dead.

The first part of this book, comprising papers which have been previously published, consists in tackling fundamental problems at the point at which the work of Russell and Wittgenstein had left them. They are handled with great power, and at the same time elegance of treatment and lucidity, and probably with success. The second part, which has not previously been published, deals with Probability and associated subjects, starting from a criticism of my *Treatise on Probability*, which was published in 1921. This latter part had not been published because it was fragmentary and not completely satisfactory. But it is of the greatest interest both in itself and as showing in some detail how far his mind was departing, in pursuance of certain hints thrown out in the first part, from the formal and objective treatment of his immediate predecessors. The first impression conveyed by the work of Russell was that the field of formal logic was enormously extended. The gradual perfection of the formal treatment at the hands of himself, of Wittgenstein and of Ramsey had been, however, gradually to empty it of content and to reduce it more and more to mere dry bones, until finally it seemed to exclude not only all experience, but most of the principles, usually reckoned logical, of reasonable thought. Wittgenstein's solution was to regard everything else as a sort of inspired nonsense, having great value indeed for the individual, but incapable of being exactly discussed. Ramsey's reaction was towards what he himself described as a sort of pragmatism, not unsympathetic to Russell, but repugnant to Wittgenstein. "The essence of pragmatism," he says, "I take to be this, that the meaning of a sentence is to be defined by reference to the actions to which asserting it would lead, or, more vaguely still, by its possible causes and effects. Of this I feel certain, but of nothing more definite."

Thus he was led to consider "human logic" as distinguished from "formal logic." Formal logic is concerned with nothing but the rules of *consistent* thought. But in addition to this we have certain "useful mental habits" for handling the material with which we are supplied by our perceptions and by our memory and perhaps in other ways, and so arriving at or towards truth; and the analysis of such habits is also a sort of logic. The application of these ideas to the logic of probability is very fruitful. Ramsey argues, as against the view which I had put forward, that probability is concerned not with objective relations between propositions but (in some sense) with degrees of belief, and he succeeds in showing that the calculus of probabilities simply amounts to a set of rules for ensuring that the system of degrees of belief which we hold shall be a *consistent* system. Thus the calculus of probabilities belongs to formal logic. But the basis of our degrees of belief—or the a priori probabilities, as they used to be called—is part of our human outfit, perhaps given us merely by natural selection, analogous to our perceptions and our memories rather than to formal logic. So far I yield to Ramsey—I think he is right. But in attempting to distinguish "rational" degrees of belief from belief in general, he was not yet, I think, quite successful. It is not getting to the bottom of the principle of induction merely to say that it is a useful mental habit. Yet in attempting to distinguish a "human" logic from formal logic on the one hand and descriptive psychology on the other, Ramsey may have been pointing the way to the next field of study when formal logic has been put into good order and its highly limited scope properly defined. I cannot imagine a more stimulating book than this for students of philosophy to read. As Professor Moore writes in his preface to this book (which has been edited with an excellent introduction by Mr. Braithwaite), "Ramsey was not only exceptionally capable of thinking clearly himself; he also had a most uncommon power of explaining clearly to others what he thought and why he thought it. . . . In general, I think he himself knew very well indeed what he was about, and, even if he was wrong, had very good reasons for the opinions at which he had arrived."

Ramsey reminds one of Hume more than of anyone else, particularly in his common sense and a sort of hard-headed practicality towards the whole business. The reader will find many passages which convey the peculiar flavour of his mind, the expression of which—though not included by him amongst the purposes of philosophy!—was a delightful thing. Let the general reader who finds this book in his hands glance at the few pages entitled "Philosophy," and the essay, on whether there is anything to discuss, entitled "Epilogue."

J. M. KEYNES.

NEW NOVELS

Men in Darkness. By JAMES HANLEY. Lane. 7s. 6d.

Return I Dare Not. By MARGARET KENNEDY. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Full Circle. By ELINOR MORDAUNT. Secker. 7s. 6d.

Albatross. By JOHN PRESLAND. Hodder and Stoughton. 7s. 6d.

Sleeping Echo. By CATHERINE VERSCHOYLE. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

Those well-fed moralists who contend that adversity is the best school of character would do well to acquaint themselves with the work of Mr. James Hanley, whose five stories richly deserve their general title. Mr. Hanley takes his most significant characters from among the seafaring population of Liverpool, and he is at no pains to flatter either them or humanity at large. At the same time he is not to be written as one who hates his fellow-men. He is not above giving honour where honour is due. Nor is he, I fancy, didactic in intention. Ugliness is a perfectly legitimate subject for art: its disadvantage is that it lends itself too readily to satire, that form of moralising to which Mr. Aldous Huxley is so painfully addicted. But Mr. Hanley keeps his head and his temper. He presents brutal facts without comment, leaving them to speak for themselves, which they do eloquently enough. They speak for themselves and for their author as well; for these stories are quite evidently the work of an exceptionally sensitive and compassionate mind. That he scarcely ever permits himself to utter a compassionate word, and by this reticence compels our sympathy for his people, suggests that

though he may have much to learn as a writer, he has little to unlearn. He is, in fine, and more (I surmise) by instinct than by training, a considerable artist, and one whose future is likely to be exciting. He has a quick eye for significant detail, and, like some of his great predecessors in this art of the short story, he is direct with a directness that sometimes seems purely ingenuous and even childish. His dialogue, despite a generous sprinkling of oaths, is sometimes curiously unnaturalistic in its diction: he seems to have borrowed from drama the trick of endowing everyone with an unusual talent for self-expression. This at least makes for clarity and economy. The first two of the five stories occupy by far the greater part of the book. They are powerful, terrible, remorseless; the one (naively called "Narrative," which is no title at all) concerning a sea voyage, a wreck, disaster, madness and despair; the other ("Feud") an account of how two elderly seamen are driven by a hatred born of fear to murder the smart young fellow who, as we but not they are aware, is the accepted lover of the daughter of one of them. The peculiar triumph of this latter story consists in the balance of sympathy preserved between the murderers and their victim. The final curtain is masterly. The other three pieces are slighter and less successful. Throughout the book one is conscious of minor blemishes of style: "commence" leaps all too often to the eye, and "individual" is abundantly misused. Mr. Hanley is a born writer: it remains to be seen whether his imaginative scope extends beyond these dark regions.

Mr. Hanley exhibits his people struggling in a world of harsh realities: Miss Margaret Kennedy, transporting us to the opposite pole of human experience, shows us a young man starved of reality, caught and held in the web of his own specious reputation. Hugo Pott has made a fortune in record time by his plays. Success the tyrant taking hold of him, the whore Publicity marking him down for her own, he is (at the moment of our encounter with him) in imminent danger of losing his personality by absorption into a sham-Hugo. He is naturally a genial fellow, but with the eyes of the world always upon him he must *act* geniality in season and out, exploiting his own good nature. During nearly all his waking hours, we are given to understand, he is on show; and even in solitude he is accompanied by echoes of his own importance. "The thing was like an orchestra in a restaurant. He did not always listen to it, but it was always there. It accompanied every course in the Trimalchian banquet of his career, and in moments of solitude, like this, when he could stop to listen, the noise it made was deafening. He could hear nothing else very clearly, and his thoughts came to him in a muffled confusion." It is not easy to take this situation very seriously, and in her opening chapters Miss Kennedy does not help us to do so; it is all done lightly, wittily, with perhaps a slight excess of comic exaggeration. But no sooner have we persuaded ourselves that this is to be an amusing featherweight novel than the mood changes. Hugo's immediate destination is Syranwood, the scene of a week-end house party. The other guests are introduced to us during the train-journey, and we arrive at Syranwood in possession of all the necessary facts, such as that Hugo is inclined to be in love with Philomena Grey (wife of "Gibbie"), that Corney Cooke has a genius for prying, and that Sir Adrian Upward is an elderly critic of literature. There is also Laura, whose love story, confided by her to Adrian, marks the beginning of the second movement. Hugo, at first the life and soul of the party (according to plan), comes a small psychological cropper and takes refuge in a form of sulks; but he emerges from his confusions with the help of Marianne, a young girl who adores him; there is an idyll on the downs by moonlight (at once the most real and the most romantic episode in the book); and Hugo, shaking free at last of his pseudo-self, resolves not to return to London. Of Marianne it is written: "She was so completely happy that she had almost left off being herself. The barrier between herself and everything round her, the dark cooling air, the huddled stacks, crumbled away, so that her peace was one with the peace of the sleeping world. This was her whole life, since an entire existence is no longer than its moment of highest fulfilment. . . . She held his sleeping spirit in her hands and she was content." Marianne, indeed, is closely akin to Tessa, the Constant Nymph, being young and wise, candid and loving. At the other end of the time-scale stands Lady Geraldine, that charmingly absent-minded old lady; a type frequently encountered not only in fiction but in real life. In the persons of Marianne and Lady Geraldine two kinds of wisdom are presented for our admiration: the intuitive wisdom of innocence and the shrewd harvest of a long experience. Perhaps it is at these extremes that the treasure is to be found; or perhaps that is only the fond delusion of those of us who stand somewhere between them. This is very far from being Miss Kennedy's best book. Which is her best I am not prepared to say, but I must record my conviction that *The Ladies of Lyndon*, her first, has never been sufficiently praised.

The chief fact that emerges from Mrs. Mordaunt's *Full Circle* is that she detests her central character; and it says much for the force of that detestation that she has gone to the trouble of celebrating it in a full-length novel. For Leverson Hurle is something less than a cad: he is a formula; and making a book of him, had it not been a labour of hate, would have been an impossibly dreary task. Nor is the result, despite flashes of wit and an abundance of malice, other than dreary. Leverson Hurle did this and Leverson Hurle did that: Mrs. Mordaunt repeats the name, as though it were an incantation, every time she sticks a pin into her dummy. Leverson Hurle is a novelist who turns his friends into copy. He lacks taste, scruples, humanity; he is full of emptiness. In his early days, when he is a poor student of science, he lives with a girl called Lil, who one day prostitutes herself in order to buy him a microscope which he covets. For this sublime craziness he turns and rends her. What a story Maupassant (or Tchehov in his so different way) would have made of that! In Mrs. Mordaunt's hands it is wasted, not because she is incompetent (that she is far from being), but because she is too busy disliking her precious Leverson Hurle to endow Lil with individuality and a credible idiom.

John Presland's *Albatross* deserves more space than is left for it. It would have deserved more still had she been able to sustain the high imaginative quality of the opening chapters. It is the story of a young airship commander, leader of an Antarctic expedition, who is found guilty, on his return home, of a grave dereliction of duty. That part of the narrative which deals with the expedition and the ultimate disaster is so conspicuously better than what follows that I find difficulty in believing that it is all the work of one author.

Sleeping Echo is a quiet and ladylike performance which calls for no comment.

GERALD BULLETT.

TWO AMERICAN AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Dawn. By THEODORE DREISER. Constable. 10s.

The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens. Harrap. Two Vols. 30s.

"You write good English, Theodore," said the first of several teachers who took an interest in Mr. Dreiser. That young woman was unfit for her work, and we learn with pleasure that she married early and abandoned it. Mr. Dreiser's English is often of the worst. There can hardly be a living writer more confused over the use of "as" or more at a loss when a variant of the universal American verb "to sense" is required. Nevertheless the power of Mr. Dreiser's work is undeniable, and in this narrative of his youth in Indiana and his ramshackle family he is, on the whole, at his best. His father was a German immigrant, a failure in business, a fanatical Catholic. His mother's stock was Moravian, of the Mennonite sect. In her son's portrait she is a beautiful and pathetic creature, who deserved something far better than the disorderly household that was held together by her love and loyalty. The Dreisers were surprisingly ill-fated. During all the period covered by *Dawn* they shifted miserably from one small town to another in Indiana, with migrations to and from Chicago; and perhaps the most curious and illuminating thing that emerges from this picture of life in the Middle West of the 'eighties and early 'nineties, with all its abounding vigour and opportunity, is this, that a new American family group, energetic and variously gifted, could muddle along year after year without hope, making the poorest living by intolerable means. Theodore Dreiser, to be sure, had some unusual luck. Women teachers were kind to him, and to one of them he was indebted for a course at the State College of Indiana. It did not help him to get work, for we find him at the end of the volume toiling in Chicago for laundries and real-estate agents, with the daily newspaper beginning to offer him a way of escape. Mr. Dreiser belongs to the frankest school of autobiography. Not only does he go into the confessional on his own behalf, he gives away his brothers and sisters. He discourses of his tortured sex life with a naiveté and an evident ignorance of physiology astonishing in a man of sixty to whom the whole of raw America has, *ex hypothesi*, been revealed.

Mr. Lincoln Steffens is an American journalist whose story is a very remarkable record of newspaper correspondence and special kinds of magazine writing. He at least has no cause to complain of his American birth and upbringing. A childhood and youth in California gave him an enviable start, and fortune enabled him to add student years in Germany (which, amazingly, brought him a small competence for life) to his training at a Western university. Mr. Steffens is essentially a product of the civic reform era which culminated in the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, and although in his latter stages he presents himself as a completely cynical modern, beyond good and evil, that pose will not deceive the European reader, while it makes laughter in those provinces of the American world where the name of Lincoln Steffens is widely and intimately known. Thirty years ago the owner of *McClure's Magazine* was won over by a group of ardent young reformers who were sworn to expose the empire of graft in city and state government. Mr. Steffens was the most vital and original member of the company, which included Miss Ida Tarbell and Mr. Ray Stannard Baker, afterwards to be known as the official biographer of Woodrow Wilson. The work begun in *McClure's* was continued in two other monthlies, and before Mr. Steffens came to the end of his "muckraking" period, as it is always called in America, he had to his credit a list of terrifying disclosures: the corruption of municipal government and police officers; the rule of political and financial bosses in city and state; the systematic resort to violence and to dynamite by capital and labour alike; the degradation of "democracy" in every centre between Boston and San Francisco. Mr. Steffens reviews it all in vivid detail, and he displays an extraordinary gusto when describing the marvellous crooks, blackguards, and gangsters he has known. Beginning as an enthusiast for democracy, an evangelist with a pure belief in the people, Mr. Steffens arrives at a nihilist creed which he proclaims with all the fervour of his early faith. He once thought that the people wanted good government and a free democracy, and that the reformer's task was to help them to it and incidentally turn the rascals out. He is now—within hail of seventy, and after forty years of activity among men of affairs—convinced of certain things: for example, that ethics has no place in public life; that the "honest crook" in office is much better than the righteous man; that public service cannot be performed without the breaking of laws; that every man has his price and the community must pay it—and, presumably, that Mayor Bill Thompson, Scarface Capone, and Jack Diamond are to be accepted as God's most potent instrument to carry out his pure intent, America being in the long run justified of all her children. These two volumes comprise a fascinating revelation of American character, romantic adventure, and the bottomless corruption of public life in "God's country."

THE LIFE OF A SPECIALIST

Noguchi. By GUSTAV ECKSTEIN. Harpers. 18s.

It is difficult to decide whether this is a bad or a good book. Its style is so reminiscent of that affected by writers of film captions—"came the dawn"—that immediate reactions may be deceptive.

> English he does not have to take but likes to. More than twenty in the class. Three are girls. Girls study. They are below him. One is of a wealthy Samurai family. She is below him. She even borrows his notes. A girl of a wealthy Samurai family borrows the farmer's notes.

Any reader who has a sufficiently strong palate to manage 419 pages written in this manner may count on gathering a truly intimate impression of the daily thoughts and doings of one of the greatest scientists of the century.

Hideyo Noguchi was the child of obscure Japanese peasants; yet, so outstanding were his energy, ability and pertinacity that, whilst still in the twenties, he had earned world-wide recognition as a master in the field of pathological research. His emotional intensities, his happiness and his humiliations, seem to have been almost wholly involved with his technical successes and failures. Probably the tragedy of his life was provided not by its ending in Africa, three years ago, by the disease he was studying, but by his steadily growing conviction that the spirochaete which he had isolated as the causative agent of yellow fever was not the real culprit. On his death-bed this conviction seems to have been complete, and he dreaded the prospect of facing again his scientific critics. "It is the end; and I want it to be."

It was on the unravelling of bacteriological mysteries that Noguchi concentrated almost every particle of his energy; to that he gave nearly every minute of his waking time, often working in his laboratory for twenty-four hours or more at a stretch. Even when at home in bed, if an idea demanding laboratory confirmation struck him he would, as a medical friend, writing in the *Lancet* at the time of his death, tells us, "set off at once to the Institute in a taxi and immediately engage himself in the new aspect of the work." To bacteriology he gave the sort of devotion bestowed by others on art or spiritual ideals. At the age of twenty-four, writing from America to a friend in Japan, he said: "If I confess my ideal when I came, it was narrow and small. It was largely, no, it was entirely, to get glory. That was first with me. But this thinking has been destroyed and now I want to consecrate my life to one great task." And a few months later he writes:

> Up to the time of my departure I was in the middle of dream. I thought that if you succeed, that is to be a great man. Suddenly I saw that man cannot stand up in the world by ability alone. Even if you do stand up it is like machinery. It is necessary to have virtue to correspond.

Noguchi's outstanding successes in pathological research were his discovery of the spirochaete of syphilis in the brain of sufferers from general paralysis, and in the spinal cord of sufferers from locomotor ataxia, thus defining with certainty the cause of both these hitherto baffling diseases; but his total output of original contributions was enormous. His racial, no less than his individual, characteristics peculiarly fitted him for the work to which he gave his life. The author of this book drops no hint on the source of his minute knowledge of Noguchi's private life, from childhood upwards. But the story has the verisimilitude of personal intimacy; and it is even possible that the strange, jerky, sometimes babyish lingo in which it is told is in part explicable by the unconscious influence of the hero's racially characteristic excursions into a language not his own.

Harry Roberts.

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THE STRUGGLE OF THE SEALS

Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England. Vol. V. The Wardrobe, The Chamber, and The Small Seals. By T. F. TOUT. Manchester University Press. 30s.

The first volumes of the late Dr. Tout's *Chapters*, when they appeared in 1920, represented something akin to a revolution to students of the history of mediæval England. The traditional view of constitutional development was, he declared, "out of focus." He questioned for the first time the sacred doctrine that parliament was the central point of our mediæval constitution, and emphasised the importance of administrative history as compared with that of mere legislation. This revolutionary idea was already in the air. A school of French historians had already brought it to bear on the institutional history of France. It was proving fruitful in the study of Greek and Roman history.

Neither Stubbs nor Maitland grasped the fact that the exchequer and the chancery, the two great administrative offshoots thrown off in two successive centuries by the royal household, did not exercise a sole jurisdiction in their respective spheres. Stubbs realised that there was a continual struggle in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries between a court and a constitutional party, but it was left to Dr. Tout to show us the mechanism and something of the programmes of the party struggle, which in one aspect may be described as the struggle of the seals. The royal household had further split up into departments, and two of these, the King's wardrobe and the King's chamber, habitually overlapped the functions of both chancery and exchequer. By the fourteenth century the King's wardrobe, originally a place of safe deposit for the King's clothes, valuables and private archives, had become a third great department of state. In 1312 Edward II was forced by the Ordainers to separate the keepership of the privy seal from the controllership of the wardrobe and to recognise an independent keeper of the privy seal. A nominee of the barons, he was responsible to them, and remained with his staff of four clerks, writing for the seal, for long periods out of court. The seal thus ceased to fulfil its original purpose of expressing the King's personal wishes.

In this latest volume the theme is elaborated of the process by which the privy seal was officialised and eventually went out of court, and of the reduplications of the seal. The conditions of the great continental war gave it an impetus, involving for many years a division between the ministry in England and the ministry which followed the King to his wars overseas. "Just as under normal conditions every administrative function fell upon the chancellor, the 'secretary of state for all departments,' so during the war the keeper of the privy seal became the second chancellor for all such business as had to be dealt with by the King abroad with the advice of his immediate followers." The habit grew up of entrusting the great seal to the keeper of the privy seal. Under these conditions he discharged the duties which in modern days would fall to the secretaries of state for foreign affairs and for war. He was, early in the reign of Edward III, definitely recognised as one of the three chief ministers of state, to be named with, though still after, the chancellor and treasurer. All were indispensable members of council but the keeper had special influence on council. The great seal summoned parliaments but the privy seal summoned councils. Yet all seals were seals of the King, and when they were successively officialised and "went out of court" others were devised; the secret seals, the griffin, the signum, the signet. The King's chamber was fighting a losing battle.

The story of the seals is primarily a story of administrative development, but amid a mass of technical detail (wrested from widely scattered and often roughly calendered material) we get glimpses of great drama, national and personal. The divinity that doth hedge a king was largely the invention of a later day, but there is the stuff of tragedy in the picture of Richard II taking "the ring of gold of his patent signet" from his finger to place it on the finger of the Duke of Lancaster.

In this volume as in the earlier ones the humanist is ever in evidence. We are fascinated by details of diplomacy, told how charters and letters, patent and close, were folded and sealed, when green wax or green and white were used, and when red. We are given the human story of the personnel, the keepers and their clerks, their fees, perquisites and chances of preferment.

Professor Hilda Johnstone, Dr. Tout's sister-in-law, and Dr. Margaret Sharp, his daughter, have contributed respectively chapters on "The Queen's Household" and "The Household of the Black Prince." These represent at once a work of piety and sound scholarship worthy of this concluding volume of the text of an invaluable contribution to mediæval studies. Mrs. Tout provides a welcome preface and an index volume with appendices is promised.

GORDON CRAIG

Gordon Craig and the Theatre. By ENID ROSE. Sampson Low. 12s. 6d.

Since I was not in London in 1903, in Moscow in 1912, or in Copenhagen in 1926, it is impossible for me to give a critical opinion on Mr. Gordon Craig's art. Unluckily, Miss Enid Rose seems to labour under the same disadvantage. Even as biography her book is not very adequate: the reader receives the impression that Mr. Craig's father was a talented architect and stage-designer called Godwin, but this remains only an impression. What can be the purpose of such evasiveness? Mr. Craig himself is certainly the last person not to be proud of his distinguished origin. Almost the only merit discernible in this book is the author's genuine enthusiasm, and this is not accompanied even by the solicitude necessary to avoid misprints. The problem of Mr. Gordon Craig remains unsolved.

For it is a problem. Mr. Craig, I am told, is a producer of genius; and I believe what I am told on such a subject by men like Stanislavsky, Komisarjevsky, Copeau, and Poulsen. On the other hand, the inferiority of the contemporary English theatre is chiefly due to the lack of good producers. There are many excellent actors in London, and several good designers of scenery and costume. But no one familiar with the theatre in New York or Berlin can deny that the London standard of producing is a disgrace. Why, then, has Mr. Craig not produced a play in England during the last twenty-eight years? Are all our managers entirely without either discrimination or enterprise? Or is Mr. Craig "impossible to work with"? An affirmative answer to either of these questions would probably be unjust as well as libellous. There is an alternative explanation.

Mr. Gordon Craig was born a few years too soon. He loved the theatre passionately, but apart from the acting of a few individuals the theatre had become utterly unworthy of his love. He planned its regeneration, but it did not wish to be regenerated. The English managers were utterly blind, utterly unadventurous. Craig went abroad, became a missionary, and his preaching was successful. His doctrine was accepted and practised (not always very honestly) by Russians, by Germans, by Americans; the theatre revived. Even in England Craig's influence was felt; but Craig himself remained without a job. It would be astonishing if he had not become a little bitter, a little difficult. Recognised as a genius by the most successful producers of the Continent, why should he compromise with the barbarous notions of English and American managers? He had surely earned the right to work on his own terms. As a result he has not worked in England at all.

Stanislavsky complains that in the Moscow Art Theatre *Hamlet* Craig's scenic screens were apt to fall down. Miss Enid Rose comments that if this were true it would reflect on the clumsiness of the staff rather than on the skill of the designer. But surely it is the designer's business to allow for the clumsiness of the staff. If scene-shifters were paragons of agility they would not be scene-shifters but prosperous acrobats. This indicates, I suspect, Mr. Craig's weak spot. Human beings are the materials in which a producer works, and he has never been willing to allow enough for the fallibility of human beings. When his scenery for Duse's *Rosmersholm* was cut down and spoiled to fit a particular stage, she wrote to him, "What they have done to your scene they have been doing for years to my art." But Duse has left in all who saw her a marvellous memory of things achieved, while Mr. Craig has preferred no bread to half a loaf. If he had been willing to compromise, to exert his gifts in unfavourable conditions imposed by sceptical managers, he would have suffered tortures, but he might well be to-day, like Reinhardt, the dictator of his own theatre. All great producers have had to begin by making the best of a bad job. It was Mr. Craig's misfortune that he became famous before, instead of after, an agonising apprenticeship. His designs for scenery already date. Scenic art must always be related to the architecture and painting of the age, and Mr. Craig belongs to the generation before Corbusier and Picasso. But it is as a producer.

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not as a designer or as a writer, that he makes his claim; and London needs producers as badly as ever. Will not some manager offer him the best terms he can? And will not Mr. Craig accept the best terms he is offered?

RAYMOND MORTIMER.

A FRENCH VIEW OF ENGLISH POETS

Sept Essais de Littérature Anglaise. Par PAUL CHAUVET. Editions Eugéne Figuière. Paris.

The interest of M. Chauvet's book of criticism lies somewhat apart from its subject. He discusses seven poets of the nineteenth-century writing in English: Allan Edgar Poe (*sic*), James Thomson, Oscar Wilde, Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, and the two Brownings. His method is to discover the philosophy of life of each of these poets, and to instance it by quotations from their works. The result is curious, not so much in its valuation of Victorian poetry, which on the whole is just, but in the whole method of approach. He impresses one with the importance and seriousness of the writers he is discussing (English critics frequently fail to do so), but he does not show them essentially as poets. A glance at the quotations will reveal a certain amount of indifferent and sententious verse. Even those which are most apt seem to have been chosen for another reason. Thus, Browning's

> Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or what's a heaven for?

certainly illustrates Browning's philosophy of life; yet an English critic would prefer to put it in some such way as this: "It is typica' of Browning's turn of thought and his use of words."

Oddities obtrude. There is, of course, the usual grave reference to Jerome. But "la douleur, la tristesse d'Arnold" surprises and almost shocks. Was Arnold sad? One retrieves impressions of the poems; yes, *The Forsaken Mermaid* is sad, *Tristram* is sad . . . M. Chauvet goes on with disturbing equanimity. "La vie? Une mer inconnaissable," and he quotes three lines of Arnold. His scepticism, his melancholy and despair, are gently insisted on, till at the end of the essay one is left alone with Arnold's pessimism, "un peu mièvre, dirai-je parfois pleurnichard." How nearly true it all is! and yet one cries, in bafflement, "Good God! Arnold was not sad!" With Oscar Wilde M. Chauvet is on familiar ground. He lets himself go over Wilde's versatility:

> Une étonnante richesse le charactérise. Plus intellectuel que Morris et les poètes de la "fleshly school," grec autant que Keats, mais avec plus de modération, tour à tour athénien, londonien, parisien, épris au même instant de l'artificiel et de la nature; à la fois Rosetti et Chesterfield; dévot, déiste et mariôlatre, balloté entre le protéstantisme et le catholicisme romain, le pape et Milton; cherchant dans le paganisme l'oubli de la pensée et dans le mysticisme la réalité de la souffrance; hellène et puritain . . .

and so on for two pages. M. Chauvet considers *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* one of the finest poems in the English language, and his appreciation, though remote from English opinion, is a pleasure to read. English criticism of Oscar Wilde is consistently mean; his faults of vulgarity, pose, a sort of protracted adolescence, blind us to many good qualities in his work. M. Chauvet's rhapsody is only another example of the tribute of French criticism to Wilde, but it is worth reading for its genuine appreciation of the impressionism, the perfectly caught momentariness of Wilde's best work. If Wilde had been born a Frenchman there is little doubt that many English critics would have accepted him as a great writer.

The essays on Tennyson and the Brownings are fair, and take their tone from English criticism. M. Chauvet's appreciation of the Cockney element in James Thomson is pleasantly quick. The book as a whole is a plain and intelligent statement of the ingredients of thought in its seven subjects, and the author emerges in an epilogue, "avec un respect accru pour 'mes' poètes et surtout pour 'le' poète." Sometimes he has an air of taking his poets too seriously and not pleasantly enough. But this is also, for an English reader, the chief attraction of the book. Serious discussion of a poet's thought is an un-English habit, and to find a French professor taking the thought of our Victorian poets and almost pickling it in a jar is a good tonic for our fundamental flippancy. We tend too much to think of poetry as a line or a poem with particular quality, and to ignore the general impact of a poet's work. M. Chauvet misses the particular quality of English poetry, and he misses other things like Wilde's vulgarity and Arnold's schoolmasterishness. But his picture of his chosen poets is improving, as well as diverting.

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SHORTER NOTICES

In the Highlands. By SETON GORDON. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

Sir Robert Bruce in the foreword he contributes to these charming nature studies compares Mr. Seton Gordon with Gilbert White of Selborne, describing them as "kindred souls." They may be. But if the style is the man, Mr. Gordon is as like White as Selborne is like the Cairngorms. Here is none of the homely intimacy of White, for Mr. Gordon is shyer than the shyest bird he describes and you may read this book a dozen times and still be unaware of him. But you will know the Highlands and their wild—especially bird—life, throughout the year, for it is month by month that they are here described by an observer who misses nothing. Thus January is the ravens' month, for before the month is out their nest is built and maybe the first egg laid, and the story opens with a pair tumbling and somersaulting; but one thing leads to another, and before the end we have heard something of otters and eagles, of ptarmigan and snow-buntings and woodcock, and of the migration of thrushes, and robins and wild swans. And so the tale runs through the year. It is a happy idea, happily carried out; and the book is pleasantly illustrated.

English Education Under the Test Acts: Being the History of the Nonconformist Academies, 1662-1820. By H. MCLACHLAN. Manchester University Press. 12s. 6d.

Dr. McLachlan here deals with the effects of the Test Acts upon English education, and in his detailed review of the Nonconformist Academies that were set up to provide a University education for candidates to the Ministry, he demonstrates how considerable was the effect of these Academies in broadening the base of higher education in this country. The Academies could not compare with the two great Universities in the machinery of learning, for they were understaffed and ill-equipped, but they had zeal, and learning, and efficiency; and they numbered among the distinguished pupils who passed through them, bishops and archbishops, Lord Chancellors and Judges, and such a curious assembly of notables as Harley and St. John, Bishop Butler, John Howard, Malthus, Joseph Priestley, John Foster, Hazlitt, and Defoe. In a work of immense research, Dr. McLachlan deals separately with each of the more famous Academies, giving its staff and curriculum, its best-known teachers and pupils; and the result is an honourable record of educational activity.

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The Wind in the Bus-Tops. By C. P. HAWKES. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

This book is a compilation of sketches written for the papers. Where the author has not too obviously searched for copy his pieces will appeal to those who prefer fancy to imagination. Tender sentimentality is the best description of the book's general note. If all the pieces were as good as "At the Proms" the book would merit consideration. A piece such as "Nom d'une pipe" is definitely good to read in the pages of *Punch* while waiting for the dentist, but there is something almost dreadful about it being put into a book. "The Oldest Crook Play" (*Punch and Judy*) if it manages to reach the right people will give pleasure to them. But the worst of a book like this is that it is nearly all thought up by a trained padder; all fancy without love. In this age when so many millions of books are written the padder is almost unforgivable.

Tales from the Moors and the Mountains. By DONALD A. MACKENZIE. Blackie. 7s. 6d.

If there were no other evidence their folklore alone would point to Ireland as the cradle of the Highland Scots. Here is a collection of folk-stories gathered from "the land of the glens, the bens and the heroes." Some of the stories Mr. Mackenzie has collected are from the world's common stock, stories that might be told anywhere from Skye to the Caucasus. But the stories of the Kings who were but crowned peasants, and of peasants who married Kings' daughters and became Kings, of men captured by the fairies and who danced with them or piped for them one brief summer's night that lasted a lifetime, of heroes that are partly historic and partly legendary, these are pure Celtic, and of them Mr. Mackenzie has garnered a dozen or more full of the charm which seems to prove that they were created in a land in which all men were poets.

Fishing for Trout and Sea Trout with Worm and Wet Fly. By JOHN STIRLING. Philip Allan. 7s. 6d.

There was a time, and not so very long ago, when the title of Mr. Stirling's present book would have sent a shudder through the fly-fishing world, and every heart in Stockbridge would have stopped a beat when the news went round that such crimes could be, even in the wilds of Scotland. But times have changed, and become harder. We have less leisure, and a blank fishing holiday is a tragedy to the man who can snatch but one a year, so it has been admitted, even by purists, though reluctantly, that there is much to be said for the wet fly, and that worm fishing is a gentler craft than was once supposed. It is true, of course, that Mr. Stirling writes of the rivers, streams and lochs of Scotland, and not of the chalk streams of the south, but there are days and even weeks when the noblest trout are sulky, and then it is that the lore here expounded will have its uses. Mr. Stirling has written particularly for beginners, and although it is always Scottish conditions he has in mind, there is little in the way of wet-fly and worm fishing that he does not cover with sound and particularly lucid advice.

Marie Louise, Empress of France, Duchess of Parma. By E. M. ODDIE. Mathews and Marrot. 18s.

The brief reign of Napoleon's second Empress was but an interlude in a life that was to be crowded with strange marital adventure. Miss Oddie's style is at times a little disconcerting; but she tells her story clearly enough and is at her best in the narrative of the later years when, as Duchess of Parma, Marie Louise was first the mistress and then the secret wife of her Chamberlain, Marshal Count Neipperg, by whom she had two children, publicly acknowledged from their birth. Yet there was nothing in Marie Louise that justifies us in classing her with the harlots of history. Her tastes, indeed, were domestic, and if she cultivated domesticity unconventionally, that was the only way open to her. Her third and last marriage, after Neipperg's death, with the Comte de Bombelles, also her Chamberlain, seems to have been singularly humdrum. But as it was secret it merely added to the scandal that had gathered round her name. The book is pleasantly illustrated with reproductions of contemporary portraits.

The Plays of Bernard Shaw. Constable. 12s. 6d.

Here is a pantechnicon volume of bric-à-brac, period pieces and indispensable household furniture. It may be noted that the prefaces to the plays are not included, but this need not impair our gratitude for a well-printed and well-produced piece of work, which can be easily held and is every ounce its money's worth.

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GRAMOPHONE NOTES

As it has been impossible to obtain the October list in time to review, I have turned to the H.M.V. American lists, which include two fine recordings of works by that brilliant but anomalous figure, Rachmaninov.

Rachmaninov is typical of the generation of Russian composers which succeeded to the nationalists like Borodin. Unhappily poised between classicism and romanticism, Russian sentiment and German technique, Rachmaninov has something of the melancholy of the professional exile, the nostalgia of an English spinster living just within her means at Monte Carlo.

More brilliantly endowed than most contemporary composers, he yet has failed to produce any outstanding work in one of the larger forms. This, of course, would be excusable were he content to remain a miniaturist like the admirable Liadoff, but unfortunately he prefers canvases of more heroic size, and though his talent is essentially feminine and reflective he is always striving after the tragic and grandiose. The uneasy emotion that fills his concertos is not emotion remembered in tranquillity, but emotion hoped for in agitation. It is the rather sterile emotionalism of the person deliberately seeking a romantic love-affair—the type that would be quite happy if only it had something to be unhappy about. Rachmaninov in fact enjoys a good cry for its own sake.

And yet it would be unfair to consider his works as a mere synthetic emotional paste, for although their conception may be groping and ineffective, their execution is brilliant and efficient to the last degree.

This 3rd Concerto in D minor displays both sides of his talent, more perhaps than the better-known No. 2. Not only is the piano writing brilliant in itself, but the sense of texture in the balance between orchestra and piano is wholly admirable. The music has many passages of great charm and even beauty, but we are left at the end with a vague sense of dissatisfaction, mainly, I think, because the themes are not of sufficient strength to bear the weight of symphonic development thrust upon them. Rachmaninov's themes would serve admirably for a rhapsodic prelude, in fact they often sound like half a page from one of his slighter works, but they are entirely without the germinating power which should be latent in a symphonic subject. Nor are they sufficiently contrasted in emotion to form the basis of a work of this length.

One quite appreciates Rachmaninov's desire to avoid the theatrically contrasted "masculine" and "feminine" subjects of the average symphony, but he has achieved this at the cost of a dreadful emotional monotony.

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A Noteworthy List for Bookshop or Library.

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HAMISH HAMILTON

Nowhere is there repose or exaltation, but merely a vague surging melancholy, a half-comprehended agitation of the soul full of regrets for the "might have been."

Although Rachmaninov's emotional exhibitionism leaves one with a faint feeling of nausea, there is a solidity and dignity about his workmanship that command respect. One respects too his attempt to express a personal and romantic feeling through an impersonal and classical form. He does realise at least that this is one of the main problems that faces a composer. The average present-day composer, satisfied if he produces a vague mood of nostalgia or an empty juggling with formal patterns, does not seem conscious of any problem to be faced at all. The concerto is excellently recorded by H.M.V. Horowitz's playing of the solo part could not be bettered and the L.S.O. under Albert Coates maintain their usual standard (which, incidentally, is a very high one). H.M.V. 4 12-in. D.B. 1486–1489.

The other Rachmaninov work represents the most romantic side of the composer. It is a rather turgid piece of music inspired (perhaps in the dæmonic sense) by Boecklin's well-known painting *The Isle of the Dead*. It is more consistent than the Concerto, but less interesting. The work is well recorded and played by the Philadelphia orchestra, under the composer. (H.M.V. 3 12-in. D 2011–2013.) It may seem a far cry from *The Isle of the Dead* to Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony*, but it should be remembered that Prokofiev derives far more from the Glazounov, Rachmaninov academic tradition of Russian music than from the nationalists. Granted the technique and outlook of a later generation, his work shows much the same anomalies as that of Rachmaninov. This little symphony, though, is hardly representative. It is a light-hearted *jeu d'esprit* which rattles along pleasantly enough, particularly in the finale, where the composer's nationality furtively peeps through the classical cloak. It is not unlike Cimarosa up to date (including, of course, the Russian touches). H.M.V. 2 12in. D1857–1858, on the last side two familiar extracts from *The Love of the Three Oranges*.

Odeon have brought out two orchestral pieces from Honegger's *Les Aventures du Roi Pausole*. Since the days of *Les Six*, Honegger has dabbled in every conceivable style from the frankly sentimental to the consciously hideous. *Le Roi Pausole* finds him back again in the days of *Les Six*, if the spiky little overture and ballet are representative of the whole work.

The music is not unpleasant, but it has all been said before by Auric and Rieti and hardly requires saying again. This mixture of the music-hall and the eighteenth century is by now a rather stale recipe. Music of this type is usually praised for its concision merely because it is not long winded.

But a concise work should be a concentrated work, whereas Honegger's overture is merely an empty work which lasts a shorter while than the average light opera overture. Admittedly an epigram is brief, but so are such repartees as "Sez You" and "Oh Yeah?"

Brevity in itself is not a musical virtue and is not even a guarantee against boredom. We can admire in some of Schönberg's very short pieces the concentration of thought on the part of the composer even if we agree with Mr. Cecil Gray that Schönberg throws out the baby with the bath water. But no longer should we be called on to admire the composer who deliberately flings away the baby in order that the pure form of the water should not be disturbed by ripples.

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About Motoring

THE NEW HORNET

AT this time of year all motoring journalists feel rather jaded. They assist in introducing to the public an eternal succession of new cars, about most of which there is very little to be said. The 1932 edition of many 1931 cars differs from its predecessor just enough to inspire faint regrets in the 1931 owners, and that is all. But there really is a genuine sparkle in my eye when I begin to deal with the 1932 "Hornet" from the Wolseley factory. It reawakens that chronic mystery—the preposterous variety of six-cylinder chassis manufactured under the direction of Sir William Morris; a mystery which makes me wonder what will happen to all these models when the new Ford works at Dagenham launch their counterblast in deadly earnest. This reawakening is shared with the legion of other Morris sixes; but the Hornet possesses a more individual interest than most Morris sixes. Last year it was a most excellent seller, and deservedly so, for it was an absurdly cheap and thoroughly refined six, distinguished by a genuine sports car performance. It is a far better car this year, and embodies an innovation which will be very widely copied on small chassis. The engine and gear box have been pushed forward eight or nine inches, so that the front edge of the radiator is now level with the base of the tyre rim of the front wheel at the three o'clock position. Other makers of small cars have extended the body space by pushing the tail of the saloon out backwards, and accepting a considerable tail overhang, which makes for discomfort in the rear seats, and accentuates tail leverage when the car skids. Sluggish brains in the industry have meekly accepted it as axiomatic for thirty-five years that the front edge of the radiator should be perpendicularly above the front axle, or thereabouts. Nobody has previously questioned this axiom, and engineers entered the new Hornet for a trial trip rather suspiciously. They immediately steered their mentor to the nearest stretch of wavy tarmac, confident that the car would pitch abominably. Instead of pitching, it actually rode with exceptional steadiness. Then, the doubting Thomases hunted the neighbourhood for waves of a different periodicity. They experimented with different road speeds. They varied the number of occupants from two to four. But the new Hornet confounded them all by obstinately refusing to pitch, and by holding the road in rather miraculous fashion, almost as if it were a big Packard with those amazingly flexible springs which normally adorn a large Yankee automobile. So Sir William has obtained a remarkably good suspension, plus eight inches of additional body space. Now, eight inches on paper reads like a bagatelle. It is five-eighths of an inch more than the breadth of the two columns of type on this page. But ask any stout person who has ridden in the stern sheets of the average small car; or ask a driver thereof, when the presence of an influential person in the rear cockpit has compelled him to shift his own seat forwards. Both will unanimously inform you that after a hundred miles on the road under such conditions, even a single inch of extra legroom would be worth a king's ransom! And in this new Hornet a single stroke of the draughtsman's pencil has given us eight whole inches, plus an improved suspension, and minus any compensating disadvantages of any sort or kind. Doubtless, before long Sir Herbert Austin will mount the radiator of his 7 h.p. on a sort of forecastle, extending 2ft. ahead of the front axle, protecting it with super-bumpers, and furnishing room astern for one of those vile seven-seater bodies so dear to the heart of the American owner and the cheap jobmaster. I cannot say that I like the front appearance of the new Hornet; but the eye has to be trained to appreciate novelty, and I may like it better as the months pass. Otherwise I have nothing but a faintly shamed praise for it; why did not the idea occur to us in 1914 when the first small cars appeared?

The layout will set engineers thinking busily. The disposition of the heavier masses of the chassis with regard to the wheelbase has been fundamentally changed, with the happiest results in respect of accommodation and comfort. It would seem that most front axles have been too lightly loaded for perfect comfort in the past; and a vast improvement in the riding of all small cars may result.

In other respects the Hornet has been considerably improved. During 1931 its tiny six-cylinder engine—the tax was only £12—was always capable of some 62 miles an hour; and special sports

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editions could be made to do seventy or even eighty. But these small "revving" engines are never great pullers on a high gear, and the 1931 Hornet used to die away much too early on hills. When a grade killed its high gear, the driver came down to second, and the rest of the climb was slower and noisier than accorded with the liveliness which it displayed on the level. For 1932 it has a four-speed gear box with a silent third. The tiny high-speed engine shows to marvellous advantage on this silent third. There is a minimum of mechanical hum. The speed on the level approaches sixty on this gear before the valves begin to hop about; and an early change down on a long hill enables the car to slide up really fast in the most pleasant manner. These two changes convert the Hornet into a very formidable competitor for cars selling at prices up to £100 more than its very modest cost. I should not exaggerate if I identified it as the best value on the market in the light six-cylinder class. I recommend it entirely without reserve, voicing but one regret, that the standard saloon body is of the panelled type instead of being a welded structure of pressed steel.

I must further applaud the Wolseley directorate for a consideration unique in the annals of the industry. As far as possible they are ready to give their 1931 clients the 1932 improvements. For a small charge they will fit four-speed gear boxes and rear petrol tanks to used 1931 models. They also get full marks for including a foglight in the standard equipment. It is barely honest to sell a car as "fully equipped" in an English autumn when it is really undrivable in fog. No device known to me can render driving in fog particularly safe or comfortable; and the best fog lamp is merely a palliative. But every autumn we all get stranded in fog with a car which can only proceed if there is a spare occupant, armed with a torch, who can walk ahead and direct our crawling by his cries.

The chassis is so good that attention should be paid to the *de luxe* coachwork. All the coachwork specialists will undoubtedly produce special Hornet bodies for 1932, but the Wolseley people's own "occasional four" is really good. It is luxuriously built and furnished, as it may well be, considering that it adds £46 10s. to the cost. It has wide doors, a good tool-case, and a fine luggage receptacle. R. E. DAVIDSON.

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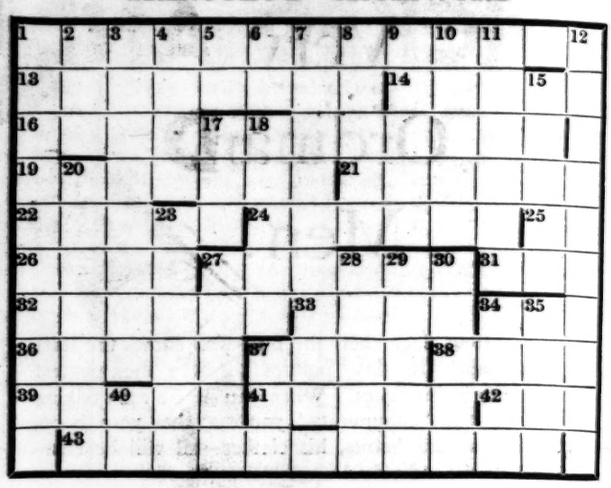

COMMON OR GARDEN

ACROSS.

1. Symbols of Victorianism.
13. They ought to have had a good time this summer (!)
14. Peter's have been voluntary since 1860.
16. Sought after, so they say, in Iceland.
19. A penny might prove suggestive.
21. Try mixing your tenses.
22. A short cut to gentlemanly preference.
24. My land is in Durham.
25. The first last, and the last first.
26. Turn the paper over.
27. I sound as if I'm seeking the bubble reputation.
31. What a dear little girl did.
32. I lived cœnobitically.
33. A plant in aqueous humour.
34. A king in brief.
36. His name conjures up valediction.
37. I was only produced under pressure.
38. Young Montague's left the middle fifth behind.
39. It sounds silly, but nurse is somewhere inside.
41. Ask Towzer if my seed appeals to him.
42. A pure heart was sufficient to ensure the strength of me.
43. The politicians just love us.

DOWN.

1. Here we "lisp in numbers."
2. Destined for the wash.
3. A spinstery sort of ideal.
4. Reverse me, and put in front of your grate to blacken.
5, 6. Made unmade.
7. One of Cæsar's sergeant-majors.
8. Here feel we but the penalty of Adam.
9. Be consumed.
10. One of the big five.
11. The Tiller girls lose their heads.
12. Provided by Baron Beaverbrook.
15. Aha, said Cortes, here's one of them turned up.
17. Not much use without a thimble or two.
18. Seek after.
20. A possible basis for argument.
23. Shut up upside-down.
27. An inverted existence.
28. Was a file the object of the Quest?
29. Twisted thread.
30. Unencumbered but backward.
34. They call me rude.
35. Mr. Gandhi turns back.
37. I started as a much longer vehicle.
40. My other name was Sin.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD. (References to *Hamlet* are in italics.)

ACROSS.—1. Soho. 5. silted. 9. *rue* (iv, 6). 12. *heaven-kissing* (iii, 4). 15. art. 16. Aldo(us). 17. opus. 19. po(et = and in Latin). 20. mactui (Actium). 22. nur (inner—i.e.). 23. Pera (pear). 26. sche(me). 27. Grisi. 28. *sit.* 29. Pam (map). 30. diegl (glide). 33. mauve. 34. one. 36. archery. 38. oat *rev.* 40. ninny. 42. ait. 43. (v)oisin. 45. gatl(ing). 46. arch. 47. clans *rev.* 48. *plum-tree-gum* (ii, 2).

DOWN.—1. Sham(rock). 2. o'er. 3. *hatchment* (iv, 5). 4. ovated. 5. *gules rev.* (ii, 2). 6, 7. *indirections* (ii, 2). 9, 8. rises (*The Sun Also Rises*). 10, 44. *unprevailing* (i, 2). 11. ego. 13. konig. 14. sup(pose). 18. *primrose* (i, 3). 21. A.C.A. 24 *rev.* astute (statue). 25. ate (Ate). 26. *sponge* (iv, 2). 28. say. 31. (Pam)e. 32. *Lethe* (i, 5). 35. pain *rev.* 36. ulna *rev.* 37. hicr (rich). 39. once (coach). 41. yam. 42. (H)art(y).

BRIDGE

Illustrative Hand No. XXV. Double of One in a Suit, with Double Jump Take-out Response.

North:		East:	
♠ J 10 6 3	♥ Q J 8 7	♠ 9 5 4 2	♥ 10 4 3
♦ Q 4 2	♣ A K	♦ 10 9 7	♣ J 9 8
West:		**South:**	
♠ A K 8 7	♥ K 9 6	♠ Q	♥ A 5 2
♦ 8 6	♣ 10 7 5 3	♦ A K J 5 3	♣ Q 6 4 2

Score: Love-all. *West deals.*

The Bidding:

West - 1 ♠	North - Double.	East - No bid.	South 4 ♦
West - No bid.	North - 5 ♦	All pass.	

Notes on the Bidding. South's bid of Four Diamonds (two tricks more than is necessary to take out the double) shows more than 2 Honour-tricks and a strong trump suit. North, with Q * * in Diamonds, can safely raise to game, as it is fairly certain that South is deficient in Spades and holds Ace or King of Hearts. It is a near try for slam on South's part, but the loss of a Spade trick is certain, and hence he has a less than even chance.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

AWAY WITH RESTRICTIONS—MR. ANGAS AND THE SLUMP—THE PROSPECTS OF A BRITISH RECOVERY—EQUITY SHARES

PITY, also, the poor stockbroker. For weeks past he has not been able to cover his expenses. He has been loyal to his staff and has struggled on, waiting for "the turn in trade." At last the dark night of the gold standard passed, and hope dawned with the return to activity of British industries. At last the speculative investor had a lead—he could buy British industrial "equities" while the gold standard world went to rack and ruin. Of course, there were plenty of risks in the adventure—I hastened to discuss them last week—but an upward move in British industrial ordinary shares on the Stock Exchange was the sort of diversion a sick country needed. Speculation has its good and bad uses, and on this occasion it was nine-tenths good. But just as business on the Stock Exchange began to develop, just as stockbrokers began to see the chance of paying the rent and the office salaries out of commission earnings, the Stock Exchange Committee decided to restrict dealings to a cash basis. Immediately the fire went out of the industrial share markets. Business fell to insignificant proportions, and instead of an entertaining display of fireworks the Stock Exchange can only offer a damp squib. May I ask the Stock Exchange Committee a few leading questions? Of what are they afraid? That credit will be used for Stock Exchange speculation instead of being used for trade? But the banks do not know how to employ all their surplus funds. In any case it is for the banks, not for the Stock Exchange Commiltee, to worry about the use of credit—if and when it begins to be abused.

* * *

Or are they afraid that inflation of security prices will lead to inflation of retail prices throughout the country? I would remind them that the index of "general business" security prices (according to the *Investors' Chronicle*) has fallen by over 55 per cent. since January 1929. The index for "all securities" (fixed interest as well as equities) in the same period has fallen by over 46 per cent. Recovery could go a long way before there would be need to cry "inflation." Nor is it for the Stock Exchange Committee to worry about the inflation of internal prices, which is a Government's job. Or are they really afraid—I think this the crux of the question—that a gamble in ordinary shares on the Stock Exchange will present a picture to the foreigner of a tumbling pound? I think they were, but second thoughts are better than panic decisions. There is nothing more calculated to bring British capital home from its hiding places abroad, or to cause American money to be transferred to London, than a healthy boom in British industrial ordinary shares. The pound sterling would benefit by any such speculation. If the speculators lose their money, it is likewise no concern of the Stock Exchange Committee. I will agree with Sir Walter Layton (*vide* his Notes in the *News Chronicle*) that speculation in shares can be easily overdone, and that British manufacturers will not benefit much in the long run unless world trade expands. But if the "bulls" went too far, if share prices were advanced too quickly, the "bears" would quickly sell "short," if the Stock Exchange Committee removed its ban on "short" selling. Over-speculation always brings its own remedies. It is more, and not less, speculation which is wanted at the present time. It is lack of speculation in the exchange markets which is bringing trade to a standstill, for until an active market develops in forward exchange merchants cannot cover their exchange risk. Restrictions on dealings in foreign exchange should be abolished as well as restrictions on dealings in securities. But let the Stock Exchange Committee begin; let it show this Government that there is no need to act hysterically just because a foolish world has pushed us off the gold standard. And if we do not quickly abolish these exchange restrictions we may lose the precious advantages of dropping the gold parity. The pound may stand too high!

* * *

Mr. L. L. B. Angas, the author of *Investment*, has lost no time in describing to the investing public *The Course of the Coming Boom* (St. Clements Press, 5s.). He starts from the assumption that the eventual stabilisation of the pound will be about 25 per cent. below the old gold parity. He goes on to argue that "an improvement in British home trade may set in motion a general world revival." Indeed, he reaches the conclusion that "the bottom of the trade cycle was reached on 19th September, 1931." I admire Mr. Angas' courage. He has been right in his investment forecasts before, and he may be right again, but he is taking a big risk. Let us argue this point in more detail. Great Britain lets the pound slide and gives an immediate concession to the debtor countries (mainly the primary producers) in respect of their sterling debt obligations. Australia, India, Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the rest should express this relief in conducting a greater volume of trade with Great Britain. Next, some of the gold standard countries follow the British lead and let their currencies depreciate in the exchange markets. Sweden, Norway and Denmark have been the first. Holland will follow if she does not wish to see her rubber, tea, sugar and tin industries in the East Indies ruined. Germany would like to follow if she could, and Belgium must be feeling the urge to drop gold. All "depreciating currency" countries gain the benefit of higher prices. Great Britain loses some part of the competitive advantage which she originally gained over other manufacturing countries when she dropped the gold standard, but all the "depreciating currency" nations gain a competitive advantage over the gold-standard countries, whose export trade will steadily dwindle. In other words, the slump will be concentrated in America, France and Germany (if she remains on gold). The prices of commodities whose markets are centred in the gold-standard countries will probably decline. It is significant that the gold prices of cotton, tin, copper, rubber and wheat have declined since Great Britain took the plunge. The question is whether the deepening of the depression in the gold-standard countries will not finally pull down the volume of trade carried on between all world-trading countries. Probably it will. Mr. Keynes in the *Sunday Express* declared: "The world will never be prosperous without a trade recovery in the United States." Another point: in so far as the countries off the gold standard allow chaos or the dark night of restrictions to take hold of their exchange markets, trade will undoubtedly suffer, for international business cannot be conducted unless all parts of the financial machine are running smoothly and freely. So we reach the same ghastly conclusion peculiar to all human affairs—that "things may get worse before they get better." That is for the world. We have at any rate taken measures to protect ourselves against the world plague.

* * *

Mr. Angas does well, however, to instruct the investor on the choice of companies benefiting from any improvement in British or world trade. The ordinary shares of those companies with a low ratio of raw material costs to total costs, and with a low ratio of ordinary capital to total capital, offer the best chances of capital appreciation in a trade boom based upon a depreciating currency. The vertical combine owning its own raw materials and making the finished product, becomes attractive in a world trade revival, particularly if it has suffered trading losses as the result of writing down the value of its raw material stocks. Manufacturing companies with a trade evenly balanced between the export and domestic markets, derive most advantage from a depreciating currency (I am ignoring tariffs). Until the pound is stabilised and we see what competitive advantages survive for our industries, and until the issue of a tariff election is decided, it is difficult to make a choice, but I would pick out Associated Portland Cement as the share with the safest prospects. This Company holds a dominating position in the domestic cement trade—consolidated by its acquisition of control of the "red triangle" group—and it will now be able to beat Belgian and French competition. It has about £2 of fixed interest capital to every £1 of ordinary capital. It has recently issued new ordinary shares, but allowing for the maintenance of the old dividend of 8 per cent. on the old ordinary shares, now quoted at 24s. 3d., the buyer should obtain a yield of 6½ per cent.

* * *

In calling attention last week to a number of foreign Government bonds which were issued on a gold basis, I wrongly included Belgian Stabilisation 7 per cent. Sterling Bonds. It should have read Roumanian Stabilisation 7 per cent. Sterling Loan of 1929, the principal and interest on which are repayable at the option of the holder in New York at $4.8665 to the £. The same provision applies to the Poland 7 per cent. Sterling Loan of 1927. But it is no use jumping into gold loans without weighing the chances of default.

The Fabian Society

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Autumn, 1931

THE Autumn course of lectures will be held this year in the Kingsway Hall, Kingsway, Holborn, on six successive Thursday evenings, beginning on Thursday, October 22nd, at 8.30. The general title of the course will be "Capitalism in Dissolution: What Next?" The dates, subjects and lectures arranged are as follows:—

I. Thursday, 22nd October:
"THE DECAY OF THE FOUNDATIONS."
Chairman: RT. HON. T. JOHNSTON, M.P.
Lecturer: MRS. BARBARA WOOTTON.

II. Thursday, 29th October:
"THE CURSE OF PLENTY: OVER-PRODUCTION AND UNDER-CONSUMPTION."
Chairman: LORD SNELL.
Lecturer: ALD. A. EMIL DAVIES, L.C.C.

III. Thursday, 5th November:
"SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT AND CAPITALIST INDUSTRY: HOW CAN THE TWO CO-OPERATE?"
Chairman: LORD MARLEY.
Lecturer: SIR NORMAN ANGELL, M.P.

IV. Thursday, 12th November:
"THE RUSSIAN EXPERIMENT."
Chairman: PRINCE D. S. MIRSKY.
Lecturer: MR. S. K. RATCLIFFE.

V. Thursday, 19th November:
"THE AMERICAN COLLAPSE."
Chairman: DR. T. DRUMMOND SHIELS, M.P.
Lecturer: PROFESSOR H. J. LASKI.

VI. Thursday, 26th November:
"WHAT, INDEED?"
Chairman: KINGSLEY MARTIN.
Lecturer: MR. BERNARD SHAW.

Admission will be by ticket for the course, which can be applied for at once, or for each lecture separately. As the accommodation is limited, preference will be given to applicants for tickets for the whole course. Applications for single tickets will therefore be reserved until October 12th, 1931, after which the remaining seats will be allotted according to priority of application.

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GLOBE.	THE IMPROPER DUCHESS.	Wed. & Sat.
HIPPODROME.	STAND UP AND SING.	Wed. & Sat.
LYRIC.	AUTUMN CROCUS.	Wed. & Sat.
PHŒNIX.	LATE NIGHT FINAL.	Wed. & Sat.
QUEEN'S.	BARRETTS OF WIMPOLE ST.	W. & S.
ST. MARTIN'S.	THE YOUNG IDEA.	Tues., Fri.
SAVOY.	SALOME. 1st Mat., October 7th, 2.40.	
STRAND.	COUNSEL'S OPINION.	Th. & Sat.
WESTMINSTER.	1st Mat., Oct. 10th. THE ANATOMIST.	
WHITEHALL.	TAKE A CHANCE.	Mon. & Sat.
WYNDHAM'S.	THE CASE OF THE FRIGHTENED LADY.	Wed., Thurs.

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A Lecture on "THE CONCEPT OF THE STATE" will be given, in English, by PROFESSOR H. KANTOROWICZ (Professor of Law in the University of Kiel) at THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2) on MONDAY, OCTOBER 12th at 5 p.m. The Chair will be taken by Professor Francis de Zulueta, F.B.A. (Regius Professor of Civil Law in the University of Oxford, and Fellow of All Souls College).

A Course of two Lectures on "THEORY OF LANGUAGE AND PSYCHOLOGY OF SPEECH" will be given, in English, by PROFESSOR KARL BÜHLER (Professor of Psychology in the University of Vienna) at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON (Gower Street, W.C.1) on OCTOBER 13th and 15th at 5.30 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by Professor Cyril L. Burt, D.Sc., M.A. (Professor of Education in the University).

The Creighton Lecture, entitled "HISTORY AND THE HISTORICAL NOVEL," will be given by PROFESSOR EDWARD JENKS, D.C.L., D.Litt., F.B.A. (Emeritus Professor of English Law in the University) at THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2) on WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14th at 5.30 p.m. The Chair will be taken by Sir William Beveridge, K.C.B., M.A., B.C.L., LL.D. (Director of the London School of Economics).

A Course of four Lectures on "BEZIEHUNGEN ZWISCHEN ENGLISCHER UND DEUTSCHER LITERATUR IM LAUFE DER JAHRHUNDERTE" will be given, in German, by PROFESSOR DR. W. STAMMLER (Professor of German Philology in the University of Greifswald) at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON (Gower Street, W.C.1) on OCTOBER 15th, 16th, 22nd and 23rd at 5.30 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by His Excellency the German Ambassador (Baron von Neurath).

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FOUR Lectures on GREAT ENGLISH DOCTORS AND THEIR MESSAGE, illustrated with lantern slides, will be delivered by Sir George Newman, K.C.B., M.D., D.C.L., on the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th October, 1931, at Gresham College, Basinghall Street, E.C.2, at 6 o'clock. Admission free.

THE New Psychology and Religion; a course of six lectures at the Mary Ward Settlement, Tavistock Place, W.C.1, by Lawrence Hyde, author of "The Learned Knife," "The Prospects of Humanism," etc., commencing October 13th. Fee for course, 5s.

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.—Sunday, October 4th, at 11 a.m.
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